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The Nation.
April 28, 1979 $1

EXECUTIONS IN IRAN

The Islamic Republic now in place in Iran is not altogether pleasing to the Western parliamentary taste and certainly lacking in the safeguards of freedom as we define them. The spate of executions are not only repugnant in themselves but their resumption is a sad indication that right-wing elements are enhancing their control over the Provisional Revolutionary Government. The resignation last week of Foreign Minister Karim Sanjabi and the protest by the liberal Ayatollah Mahmoud Taleghani demonstrated that growing opposition to the rightward drift exists in Iran.

Americans who rightly recoil from the cruelty of the revolutionary courts would do well to consider their own Government's part in creating the conditions that led to this wave of vengeance. Our C.I.A. overthrew the elected Government in 1953 and our Defense Department showered the Shah with strategic and repressive weapons. The revolution that recently ousted him could never have received such massive popular support if "our" Shah had not been uniformly perceived as a ruthless monarch who freely sanctioned the most brutal torture, murder and repression.

Given this history and given the pressing more recent developments, the cause of freedom might now be best served if we devote our sympathetic attention to the many Iranians who today talk of how necessary it is for the revolution to "continue"—by which they mean that infant trade unions must be allowed to grow, a once-shackled press must be permitted to criticize the Government and civil liberties must be extended to the poor, women, ethnic minorities—and yes, even to those accused Savak torturers of the Pahlevi regime.

STATE OF THE UNIONS
Thomas Ferguson & Joel Rogers

LEVESQUE'S STRATEGY
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Richard A. Fineberg

NICARAGUAN BOTTOM LINE
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'HANTA YO'—SPURIOUS 'ROOTS'
Raymond J. DeMallie

THE CON-CON CON

UNBALANCING THE CONSTITUTION

BERTRAM M. GROSS

"A specter is haunting Congress," writes *New York Times* columnist William Safire, in words from Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto*, "the specter of a constitutional convention." Summoning up the same specter a few days later, conservative writer Patrick Buchanan comments: "Liberal and Tory alike blanch at the prospect of a 'People's Convention' to consider alterations in the organic document of the American union."

Safire goes on to invoke the holy name of Nobel Laureate Milton Friedman, the conservatives' beloved "Uncle Miltie." Buchanan speaks in the name of "the people," whose demand for lower prices and taxes "is being blocked by appointed bureaucrats, anointed judges and Congressional obstructionists who talk conservative rhetoric at election time and ridicule the boondocks booboisie at their Chevy Chase garden parties."

Many moderates who used liberal rhetoric at election time now go along with the pretense that cutting social services for the poor will somehow put a lid on inflation. Many liberals who used to advocate Keynesian deficits now pledge allegiance to balanced budgets—if not this year, then soon. Even some left-wingers have entered this bedroom, if not the same bed. Tom Hayden and his Campaign for Democracy have supported Gov. Jerry Brown's call for a balanced budget and a constitutional convention, just so long as a "full-employment" tag is added. This cry is echoed by John Judis, managing editor of the socialist

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LETTERS.

MORE BILINGUALISM COMMENT

New York City

Neil Postman's piece on bilingual education ["Bilingualism: A Symposium," *The Nation*, Mar. 17] begins: "About Sanford Levinson's bilingual article: I can tell from the big words he uses, like 'cleavage' and 'hegemony,' that Levinson of Princeton is an intellectual." It goes on in similarly edifying tones. It is a rare, therefore striking, nonetheless regrettable lapse from the editorial and intellectual standards of *The Nation*.

Working then as a District judge, I helped some years ago to frame the consent decree under which the bilingual program of New York City's public schools continues to struggle and, one hopes, to improve as time brings experience and wisdom. I was struck then, as I continue to be, by the uncertainties and agonizing complexities attending this kind of enterprise. So I welcomed *The Nation*'s characteristic effort to shed some light on a problem that implicates tough questions of social policy not less than law.

But pseudopopulist sophomorisms like Postman's do not help. I would suppose all *Nation* readers, like Postman himself, cope easily with the big words. If they do not, this is only an added respect in which *The Nation* may broaden their horizons, as mine were broadened by learning that the world's intellectual resources include at least one professor of "media ecology." *Marvin E. Frankel*

Johnstown, Pa.

About Neil Postman's bilingual article: I wish I could be so sure that the solution to our economic and social inequality problem was as simple as teaching everyone standard English (hardly a simple task in itself). He says that to ask whether native Spanish-speakers need English is not a legitimate question. I think it is a very legitimate question with great social implications.

A similar problem in many ways is bidialecticalism—the rationale is also the same. Somehow (and "how" does seem to be a problem in itself) these "nonstandard" dialect speakers must be taught "standard" English so that they can get jobs, make a living, etc. I think that Wayne O'Neil has pointed out some reasons why it is legitimate to ask if people must know how to speak English or standard English. O'Neil feels that this is a false promise. It does not in any way help to solve the problems of injustice in our political and economic system. He also thinks that this is not the purpose it is intended for; rather, it is one more way of insuring the status quo. What it does do is make people skilled enough to be fully exploited and also return the blame to them if they fail because supposedly they had every chance in our "free" society to make what they could of themselves. If they fail, it is their own fault. O'Neil calls it a "crumb, a symbol for the moment," when in fact, nothing is being offered. I think these are legitimate considerations in regard to bilingualism.

What is really needed is a re-educating of attitudes toward language, dialects and our political and economic system, for they are all inextricably bound to one another, all used and abused as ways of oppression. Education should teach us about ourselves, our likenesses and differences, and how we can all best live together in cooperation instead of parasitically. So ultimately, the issue *does* have a lot to do with the *Bakke* case and even Sacco-Vanzetti. They are a part of the same system, the same political problem.

Eloise Trosan

New York City

Mr. Frankel does not like my tone or academic title. Nothing much can be said about that. But I wish to point out that my "sophomoric" reference to Sanford Levinson's big words had two purposes. First, I wanted to indicate a contradiction between his stated intention to clarify the issues and his use of what I construed as pretentious sociological jargon. For a nonsophomoric discussion of this kind of complaint, I refer Mr. Frankel to George Orwell's "Politics and the English Language." Second, I wanted to call attention to Levinson's extensive English vocabulary which, I am sure, has had something to do with his success in at least two professions. Therefore, I thought it unseemly for Levinson to argue that some Americans do not need *any* English vocabulary.

Ms. Trosan's ideology seems to commit her to the belief that it is bad for non-English-speaking people to learn English and even worse for them to learn it well. With the unwitting assistance of Wayne O'Neil of M.I.T., she reasons that people who do not know English or who are limited to a substandard dialect have no chance to reach felicitous social and economic levels and therefore cannot be blamed for their failure to do so. But people who can manage English competently do have a chance and therefore will b blamed if many of them fail. Fron these premises, she concludes that it i probably better for them not to have chance. In the face of such logic, I ar disarmed. *Neil Postma*

RACIST LANGUAGE

Santa Barbara, Calif.

I must inform you that I strongly objec to your use of the word "black" in de scribing the ongoing "graymail" case ["The Black Art of Graymail," *The Na tion*, Feb. 24]. I feel that this term i racially insulting to black people, as all of the parties involved in this "art" are white. Given the racist nature of the English language, I think you would do better to call it the "White Art of Gray-mail." . . . *Murv Glass*

ARONSON APPLAUSE

New York City

James Aronson's report ["War Talk in Peking," *The Nation*, Mar. 31] provided readers a real treat, a welcome relief from the lifeless, dreary fare served up by authors who have been out of touch with China for a long, long time. Let's hear more from him. *Charles J. Coe*

FORUM ON *THE PROGRESSIVE*

The Nation, in conjunction with the Cooper Union Forum, sponsors a panel discussion on the threat to the First Amendment in the Government's prior restraint order over *The Progressive*. In *The Progressive* case, the Government contended for the first time that it can designate some information as "classified at birth."

Erwin Knoll and Ron Carbon, editor and publisher of *The Progressive*, give the story behind the suppressed H-bomb article and map out their plans for the future. Victor Navasky, editor of *The Nation*, joins publisher Hamilton Fish, Nat Hentoff and others in New York's first public symposium on the case.

The forum follows a reception supper to honor the Nation Associates who have provided invaluable support to this magazine for more than three decades.

Open to the public, the forum begins at 8 P.M., Monday, April 23, at The Cooper Union, 7th Street and Third Avenue, New York City.

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EDITORIALS.

Amin's Last Act

There was jubilation in the streets of Kampala last week, and neither the instances of looting nor the last convulsive brutalities of Idi Amin's routed legions could detract from it. The killings of Ugandans by the remnants of Amin's defeated army demonstrated graphically what the world already suspected: Amin's real war had been waged against his own people. The massacres of members of rival Ugandan tribes by his Government surely constituted an internal form of genocide. It needs more than tribal rivalries, however, to explain the notorious Government Research Bureau, a modern secret-police apparatus manned by illiterate butchers.

Amin and his hatchetman-publicist, Robert Astles, showed a kind of perverse talent for manipulating sophisticated Western media, which retailed whole cloth his exploits—making whites carry him in a sedan chair, the tale of the crocodiles eating invading Tanzanians, the "get-well" letter to Nixon at the time of Watergate. It was as though some malevolent radar locked him in on the minds of Western newsmen, to whom he was good copy, even as they deplored him. Thus, with moral outrage dimmed by overexposure, Amin's image became that of a considerable fellow, good for a wry laugh on the nightly news, while the more significant stories about Africa's problems and its hopes were put on the spike.

Africans themselves were loathe to condemn Amin publicly, however much they privately deplored him. Even Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere, whose troops, allied with Ugandan exiles, finally deposed Amin, roundly condemned the Israelis for the raid on Entebbe. Nyerere, one of the most respected African leaders, was at the time adhering to the cardinal rule of the Organization of African Unity—that boundaries are inviolable. This rule gave Amin a sanctuary behind which he could commit his crimes; whether any other African nations had the will to intervene was beside the point, the rule was a useful one. It had enabled other African countries to devote

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themselves to improving the lot of their own people, rather than engaging in ruinous wars over obsolete colonialist boundaries.

Kenya, with which Tanzania and Uganda were once joined in the East African Community, was criticized by Tanzania for practicing an active neutrality in behalf of Amin. But the case could be made that Kenya was acting correctly, if selfishly, by O.A.U. standards. When Nyerere closed Tanzania's border to Kenya in 1977, Kenya turned elsewhere for trade, first with Uganda, and then with Rwanda, Zaire and Sudan. Kenya's freewheeling capitalist economy was distasteful to Nyerere, the prophet of "African Socialism." But Kenya has reasons to cling to the doctrine of nonintervention. It had accused Amin's predecessor, Milton Obote, of fomenting dissension among its Luo tribesmen, and a piece of its territory is claimed by Somalia.

Nyerere has restored some moral capital to the O.A.U., even though its members can now worry about the precedent he has set in doing so. (And the world will also watch to see if he allows Uganda to develop into more than a Tanzanian client.) All this is for the future. Now Uganda has a new President—the respected Yusufu K. Lule, rather than the discredited Obote. One read with bemused hopefulness Lule's response when asked by newsmen if Amin would be captured and hanged: "It has been alleged Amin has committed crimes against humanity. The evidence will have to be examined. I am not a judge," Lule replied with a near-saintly punctilio. We hope his words were the seeds of a new respect for law and individual rights in a land where they have long been absent.

George & Martha

Washington and Boston have been locked in an unseemly custody battle over the portraits of George and Martha Washington, father and mother, respectively, of their country. The Smithsonian Institution offered Boston's Athenaeum $5 million for them and the old museum, now on its uppers and reduced to selling off heirlooms like any other member of the impoverished gentry, could not refuse. The city of Boston, which helped raise the original purchase price of $1,500 paid to artist Gilbert Stuart's widow back in 1831, couldn't come up with anything better, and so went to court to try to block the sale.

We would suggest the Solomonic solution of sending George and Martha to Splitsville, with the nation's capital getting George and Boston keeping Martha, only we suspect that the couple ought to stay together for the children's sake. But what should be controlling in this matter are the prevailing ethics in the museum biz, which right now are strikingly similar to professional sports. In other words, George and Martha's move should be regarded in the same light as Pete Rose leaving Cincinnati to go to Philadelphia. It is true that there are limits; the Louvre would not sell the "Mona Lisa" to a consortium of Arabs (t whom Washington was rather fancifully compare by Boston), but in the Washington case national hono is not involved, only a change in franchise.

Of course there is the distraction of the higher bi by the Getty Museum of Los Angeles—a cool $ million—but this disappears once we keep firmly i mind that the museum biz is also show biz. Georg and Martha would simply be better box office i Washington, where 10 million pilgrims come eac year to visit various national monuments. The gra nitic George and the marmoreal Martha would fit i well and, one suspects, over the long haul the sock couple will outdraw even the all-time champ grosse King Tut. In short, the George and Martha show ha tried out in Boston long enough; they're ready for the big time.

Living Together

In the flurry of words written about the case of Michelle Marvin versus Lee Marvin (no kin), an important social-policy question has been obscured. This is the vital need to discourage the increasingly voguish custom of two people living together openly in what used to be called sin. The danger of these liaisons is not to the family structur but rather of boring us all to death. The millions o married people who were rooting that Lee Marvi would have to pay up were not acting upon the usually sound principle of justice that in victimless *crimes passionnel*, movie actors are always guilty, because (*1*) they are better looking than the rest of us, and (*2*) richer. Rather, they did it because they were sick of reading all those articles about couples who were "living with" someone.

The people in these articles always seem sort of smug about it, as if they had uncovered a truth about human nature rivaling *The Interpretation of Dreams* or the collective unconscious. Sooner or later in an interview punctuated by references to "my lady" or "old man," one of the happy pair is apt to spring the profound truth: "What difference does a piece of paper make to how much you love someone?" This is followed by the shopworn words, "We don't feel ready to make a commitment to each other."

There are lots of practical and legal reasons for unmarried people to live together (e.g., pooling of social security benefits, welfare, can't get a divorce, hate the college dorm, sex—even love), but "I'm not ready to make a commitment" is the most hollow one of the lot. Nobody is ready to make the supreme commitment of marriage, just like no soldier is ready to go over the top. Humanity is woefully ill-adapted to monogamy, as the divorce rate proves. The idea of going off to spend a lifetime with a stranger, whom one pledges to cherish, love, honor and (deleted) is an absurdity. That is why it is called a commitment—though leap of faith would be a better term.

The point is that if fewer and fewer people are will-

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ing to make commitments at this most fundamental level of man and woman, how can we expect the intangible glue of society to hold? The reason that brides are traditionally so beatific of expression is that they're inwardly laughing at the audacious joke they're playing on the cosmos. Last Valentine's Day, a television news show did a feature on the Marriage License Bureau in New York City. The place was packed with goofy-looking human beings who wanted to make commitments (some for the second or third time), on the day devoted to selling heart-shaped boxes of chocolates. The crowd of them looked as silly as a studio audience for *The Price Is Right*, only this time their madcap air was not ersatz; these people were going to play the game show of life, and they were appropriately giddy, lest they should break down and weep. They wanted that piece of paper.

What bothered us about the Marvin case was that the proposed means of reaching the socially desired result—i.e., driving the living-together thing out of the public eye and back into hypocritical secrecy where it belongs—was to make it like marriage, entangling it in the same legal snarls of alimony, support and all the rest. A better way would be to free people not only of the legal liabilities of marriage but also its beneficences. Couples about to enter into this state should be required to get that piece of paper. They could undergo a Living-Together Ceremony, at which they would pledge not to cherish, love, honor and (deleted) each other in sickness and in health, and promise to feel completely free to desert, betray or otherwise dispose of each other as quickly, freely, cleanly as they like, when they like. Such a solemn ceremony would perhaps make all these young people who are rushing into living-together stop and think.

Movable Missiles

Logical consistency has never been the strong point of defense "hard-liners." Yet it is rare when they take a totally untenable position, as many of them have in opposing the SALT II treaty while supporting plans for a new mobile ICBM basing system known as multiple protective structures (MPS).

MPS (formerly called MAPS, for multiple aim-point system) involves constructing ten to twenty launch sites for each of the 200 or so new MX missiles that the Pentagon wants to buy, then moving the missile randomly from one hole to another. The idea is that the Soviet Union will never know precisely where it is at any one time. Therefore, if they should decide to knock out America's land-based missiles, they would have to fire 4,000 or more warheads just to destroy the MX missiles. (There would still remain some 800 to 1,000 Minuteman missiles in fixed silos.)

It takes no strategic genius to perceive that the MPS plan could only work if the Russians had fewer nuclear warheads than there are "aim points." If the number of Soviet warheads exceeded the number of American holes, the whole scheme—estimated to cost $25 billion to $30 billion at least—would be worthless.

Furthermore, the Russians could build and deploy additional ICBM warheads for about what it would cost the United States to construct additional aim points. This could be accomplished through "fractionation," a process of splitting up a missile's throw-weight into more, but smaller, warheads. Using American technology, the Russians could conceivably fit up to forty warheads on one of their large SS-18 ICBMs, which now carry up to ten warheads. Thus, it would be no big deal financially for the Russians to counter MPS.

Here is where SALT II comes in. One of the treaty's provisions restricts the number of warheads that can be deployed on any ICBM to the maximum number as of January 1979. For the Russians, this number is ten. MPS may not be a workable or even a sensible solution to the problem of Minuteman vulnerability, but if it is to have even the slightest possibility of working, a limit on warheads—and thus the passage of SALT II—is absolutely necessary.

Yet one confronts the strange spectacle of Senators Henry Jackson, Howard Baker, John Tower and numerous others in Congress and in such private groups as the Heritage Foundation and the Committee on the Present Danger exhibiting almost rabid enthusiasm for MPS (even to the point of trying to prevent the serious consideration of any other mobile basing schemes) and simultaneously displaying various degrees of passionate opposition toward SALT II.

How to explain this paradox? Perhaps the best explanation was offered by Paul Nitze, former high-ranking State and Defense Department official, current intellectual guru of the Committee on the Present Danger and chief SALT critic. Nitze has been heard to say that it might be difficult to muster the support of the American public for a new wave of highly expensive nuclear weapons systems (MX missile, MPS, Trident submarine, Trident II missile, cruise missile, a new bomber and so forth)—unless SALT II is voted down in the Senate.

Obviously, Nitze is correct. The Senate's rejection of SALT II would touch off an escalation in Soviet strategic missile programs which would in turn stimulate public fears and support for an American counter-buildup. Moreover, a rejection would put Nitze and his colleagues on the political map as a serious force to be contended with, and consulted, on every major issue of defense policy. (It is no secret in Washington that Nitze and his friends were piqued when, at the beginning of his term, President Carter did not tap anyone from their ranks for a top job in the Defense Department or National Security Council.)

Certainly a combined pro-MPS/anti-SALT stance is strategically irrational and intellectually dishonest. The defense "experts" who advocate such a self-contradictory doctrine betray their true political motives a bit more blatantly than usual.

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VARIATIONS

CALVIN TRILLIN

Suspicions that I am, by the standards of this journal, not well and truly committed to the cause of the oppressed will surely be evaporated by the intensity with which I support Kenneth Uston, who was ejected from the Resorts International casino in Atlantic City for playing blackjack too well. I would sign petitions for Uston, perhaps even legibly. I would march in any demonstration for him—any demonstration, at least, that was held in a place reasonably convenient to my neighborhood and was organized in a way that assured protection from hooligans hired by the forces of reaction. If Uston were in need of financial aid, I would throw my home open for a cocktail party to benefit his legal defense fund—a statement I make knowing full well that the A.C.L.U. is bearing the costs of his litigation and that Uston himself won $43,000 in Atlantic City before Resorts International wised up and showed him the door. I support Kenneth Uston, in other words, without qualification.

I take this stand, I might add, without having anything to gain personally from seeing justice triumph in Uston's case. This is not like those intellectuals supporting Larry Flynt on the proposition that once the prosecuting attorney of Fulton County has whetted his teeth on *Hustler* he will inevitably turn his attention to lyric poetry or essays comparing Christopher Marlowe to the early films of Wallace Beery. Uston is what is known as a card-counter: He reduces the house odds in blackjack by remembering how many face cards have been played and betting accordingly. I am not a card-counter. I think I can say, without intending any disrespect to the oppressed Uston, that I don't even particularly like card-counters. I rank them with diet-balancers and budget-makers and trim-and-gutter-maintainers as people who seem to take pleasure in behaving in ways that remind me of what I would be doing if I were a person of somewhat better character. One reason I never took up bridge is that I knew I would resent the people who kept track of the cards that had been played while I allowed my attention to wander in the direction of speculations on what the hostess might be planning by way of an after-game snack.

Another reason I never took up bridge is the knowledge that even if I counted the cards I could never remember the count. I have difficulty remembering anything—an affliction I trace to having had to memorize the Greek alphabet, forward and backward, for admission to a high school club. It has become obvious to me that knowing the Greek alphabet leaves practically no room in my memory for anything else. (I do not subscribe to the theory that only a small portion of our gray matter is actually used; I am convinced that all of us are operating at full throttle.) For years, I've been trying to forget the Greek alphabet. Some time ago, I finally managed to forget it backward—an achievement that was presumably responsible for my being able, at last, to commit my Army serial number to memory, years after my discharge—but I still can't seem to forget it forward. Uston claims he can teach anybody to be a card-counter, but he couldn't teach me—at least not while my mind remains cluttered with useless letters of foreign origin.

My support of Uston, then, is based on no bias in his favor but simply on the belief that he is being penalized for doing what all Americans are constantly exhorted to do—learning to play the game better than anyone else plays it. Nobody has accused him of using trick decks or concealed mirrors. He has not been charged with bribing barmaids to corrupt dealers. He stands accused of skill in his chosen game. It's as if high school outfielders, propelled through the agonies of training by dreams of major league contracts and shaving cream endorsements, were told by the coach, "Don't learn to play *too* well, though, or you might be asked to leave. Upsets the other fellows, you know."

If Resorts International had been acting on its own, I think I could remain calm—all of us supporters of the oppressed having grown accustomed to acts of greed and even piracy by corporations. But the casino management was acting under the explicit authorization of the New Jersey Casino Control Commission. According to *The New York Times*, the commission chairman explained that "he felt that casinos here must be profitable or other casino companies would not seek licenses, which would cut state taxes and halt the economic revival of Atlantic City." The state, in other words, has a stake in seeing to it that its citizens are systematically relieved of their paychecks by a gambling casino. A plumber from Bayonne who comes out ahead after a day at the blackjack table may have a warm glow on for a while, but he has acted contrary to the public policy of the state of New Jersey. He would, I suppose, be guilty of undermining his state even further by driving home at a lawful speed—depriving New Jersey of needed revenue it might obtain from a speeding fine.

The state gave Resorts International permission to post a sign near the gaming tables that says WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO EXCLUDE PROFESSIONAL CARD-COUNTERS FROM PLAY AT OUR BLACKJACK TABLES. The word "professional" is obviously meant to carry with it some justification for the ban: the other folks are welcome because they're just having a good time. The owners of Resorts International are having a particularly good time; in their effort to help the state along financially, they expect to take a quarter of a billion dollars off the suckers this year. With that kind of money, they should be able to hire a sign-writer who does not suffer from prolixity. The sign banning card-counters should say simply LOSERS ONLY. If the state needs further financial support, Resorts International could post another sign at the door that says TAKE A CHANCE ON THE TURNPIKE—DON'T BE A SISSY.

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ARTICLES.

LEVESQUE'S STRATEGY

Taking Quebec Seriously

STANLEY MEISLER

The question of unity in Canada may be settled in the months ahead. Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau has called a general election for May 22. If the latest polls prove prophetic, he could lose, and politics could divide in a dangerous way, with almost all of English Canada voting for the Progressive Conservative Party and only Quebec voting for Trudeau's Liberal Party. On top of this, Premier René Lévesque of Quebec has promised his province a referendum on separation sometime after the federal election, at the latest in early 1980. An outsider might expect Canada, with this kind of calendar ahead, to be engaged in a grand national debate. But, in fact, little debate is going on. Most Canadians, especially English Canadians, seem bored with the whole issue of unity and Quebec.

The reason for the ennui is that many Canadians do not take the danger of Quebec secession seriously enough for serious debate. They simply do not believe that Premier Lévesque really intends to take Quebec out. Perhaps they are right. But, if they are not, they are giving him an advantage in tactics.

There is a good deal of confusion over Lévesque's intentions. In fact, it is hard to tell these days whether he is pushing the people of Quebec toward independence or whether they are pushing him away from it. This confusion over the intentions of the leader and over the feelings of the people weakens any prognosis for the predicament of Canada. But the predicament remains. Canada is a land of 23.5 million people in which one large segment, comprising a population of 6.3 million, more than a quarter of the whole, feels, in the main, alienated and apart.

Premier Lévesque's Parti Québécois, which came to power in November 1976, is pledged to independence. But polls indicate that the people of Quebec would vote against a clean break from Canada. So Premier Lévesque has said that he will ask Quebecers to approve something called "sovereignty-association"—a sovereign Quebec nation still tied, mostly economically, to Canada. This, according to the polls, might win approval in a referendum.

Some Quebec intellectuals believe that Lévesque, bowing to public opinion, has given up the idea of independence and only intends to use the referendum to bargain for more autonomy for Quebec. After all, his party, though it dominates the legislature, won fewer than half the popular votes in the 1976 election.

But other analysts are not so sure about this. In their view, Lévesque may be cajoling reluctant Quebecers and guiding them step by step along a path that will lead inevitably to independence. There are precedents. As a Montreal historian claimed recently, independence had the support of no more than a third of the American colonists a year before July 4, 1776.

Quebecers appear content with their government. Polls indicate that the 56-year-old, chain-smoking Lévesque, a United States Office of War Information correspondent during World War II who later became the best-known newsman on French Canadian television, would continue in power if a parliamentary election were called now. His government has pushed anti-corruption and consumer-protection laws through the Quebec National Assembly and has upset English-speakers and delighted French-speakers with a law that makes French both the business and official language of Quebec. On top of this, the Parti Québécois has a chauvinist style that fits in with nationalist feelings. In Ottawa, for example, Lévesque acts, and is treated by the press, not as one of ten provincial premiers but as leader of the second nation of Canada.

But, in the end, the record of Lévesque and the Parti Québécois must rest on the confusing issue of "sovereignty-association." There is little confusion about what Lévesque says he wants. In a speech to the Quebec National Assembly last October 10, Lévesque said, "Quebec will be sovereign when its National Assembly will be the only Parliament that can legislate on its territory and Quebecers will have no other taxes to pay than those they themselves have decided to impose." In this definition, sovereignty, though perhaps a less emotional word, clearly means the same as independence.

But, in the same speech, Lévesque said his government wanted to negotiate for an official association with Canada that would start to function at the same time that Quebec became sovereign. "It is well to mark the double objective of our constitutional steps," Lévesque said. "There is no question, in our minds, of obtaining sovereignty first and then negotiating association afterward. We do not want to break our union with the rest of Canada. We want to transform it radically."

What would this association be like? Claude Morin, the Quebec Minister of Intergovernmental Relations and the party's main strategist for independence, tried to explain in a recent interview. "The only comparison," he said, "is with Europe of the future. We want to be what the European Common Market hopes to be in ten or fifteen years. Quebec and Europe are heading toward the same place from different directions."

A Parti Québécois working document, prepared for

Stanley Meisler reports from Canada for The Los Angeles Times.

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the national party congress in May, envisions a Quebec-Canada association that is a common market run by a directorate made up of an equal number of ministers from each sovereign country. The association could have joint representation in international financial organizations and in certain bodies of the United Nations. In some countries, the association might even share an embassy. In short, Lévesque and the Parti Québécois are promising political independence without the use of that shock word independence, close relations with the rest of Canada and continued economic interdependence. It is a promise of independence without cost.

But there is a catch. Lévesque and his government could conceivably issue a declaration of independence on their own someday, but they could never issue a declaration of association on their own. Association has to be negotiated. This has persuaded some Quebecers that Lévesque is only bargaining. He expects less than he promises. "The moment you talk of negotiating," said Rejean Landry, a young political scientist who teaches at Laval University in Quebec City. "there is no way to end up with absolute sovereignty-association. You end up with something else."

But this is not the only conjecture that can be made on the evidence. Lévesque might be interested in a negotiated settlement but not as an end in itself. He might look on it as more of a first step than a compromise. Increased autonomy, in his view, might be acceptable now, but only as a way of getting reluctant Quebecers used to the idea of independence later.

On the other hand, Lévesque might look on negotiation as a ploy, successful, for Lévesque, only if it breaks down or is rejected. Asked what he would do if English Canada refused to negotiate, Lévesque, in an interview with *The Montreal Gazette* at the end of last year, said, "Quebecers are not an aggressive people, but, on the other hand—I'm talking about the society I know best—they don't like to be gypped, especially when they express their democratic opinions." More recently, the national executive council of the Parti Québécois has suggested that, if English Canada rejects association, the Quebec government should hold a second referendum asking voters to approve sovereignty alone. This strategy must be approved by the national congress in May. But it is obvious that some party leaders believe that an outright rejection of association by English Canada could be used to fan feelings of separation.

It is thus shortsighted for federalists to feel complacent about Quebec. Lévesque has not, as many English Canadians believe, backed down. The results of the Quebec referendum are still vital for Canada as a whole, no matter how bored Canada is with the whole issue. □

Next Week: Spring Book Issue, featuring "The Ethics of Disclosure."

THE ALASKA LAND QUESTION

Anger on the Last Frontier

RICHARD A. FINEBERG

Fairbanks, Alaska

When President Carter turned 56.9 million acres of Alaska into national monument last December, he was hanged in effigy by demonstrators parading in subzero temperatures beneath a gray northern sky. A Fairbanks newspaper advertisement gave the nation's Chief Executive a Hitlerian mustache and labeled him "Adolf Carter." A thousand miles away to the southeast, in the Alaska fishing port of Ketchikan, another effigy of Carter was ceremoniously drowned.

Carter's executive order and the Alaska response were part of a long-playing melodrama about Alaska's vast wilderness resources that reaches its denouement in May when Congress takes up legislation that will settle the question. Representative Morris Udall, who is behind a long-standing bill that would put nearly 120 million acres of Alaska (including Carter's ersatz monuments) into national park, wildlife refuge, wild and scenic river, forest and preserve systems, and Secretary of the Interior Cecil Andrus are running a tight, three-way race with Carter for most-hated Federal figure in Alaska. Andrus has termed the Alaska land question the most important environmental issue of the century.

Many Alaskans don't like the Federal proposals. That's why they celebrated wildly in Fairbanks earlier this year when the new House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, which Udall chairs, set aside the chairman's 1974 bill (which had been passed in the House then bottled up by Alaska's Senators), and substituted a watered-down measure more acceptable to oil and gas interests, mining companies and Alaska hunters and trappers. But Udall is back with the environmentalist-backed Udall-Anderson bill, which has 153 co-sponsors and was introduced from the floor; the Interior Committee's "Huckaby Substitute" lands bill and the similar Breaux-Dingell bill were to be taken up by the Rules Committee on April 25. If the House meets Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill's schedule, Senate action can be expected during the summer. Environmentalist groups favor either pass-

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ing the strong Udall-Anderson bill—or no bill at all.

Apart from the sheer size of the land involved—at 56.9 million acres, the new national monuments cover an area slightly smaller than Oregon, the nation's enth largest state, while only Alaska and Texas have nore acres than the 118.4 million covered in Udall's roposal—the Alaska land issue is noteworthy for the ften spectacular confrontation between raw-materi-l potential and compelling wilderness beauty. To econcile the two requires calm deliberation, rational lanning. Unfortunately, the Federal players in this nelodrama have too often seemed callous to Alaska's eeds and ignorant about the land they would man-ge, while the prickly Alaskans rant shrilly, often ilting at windmills.

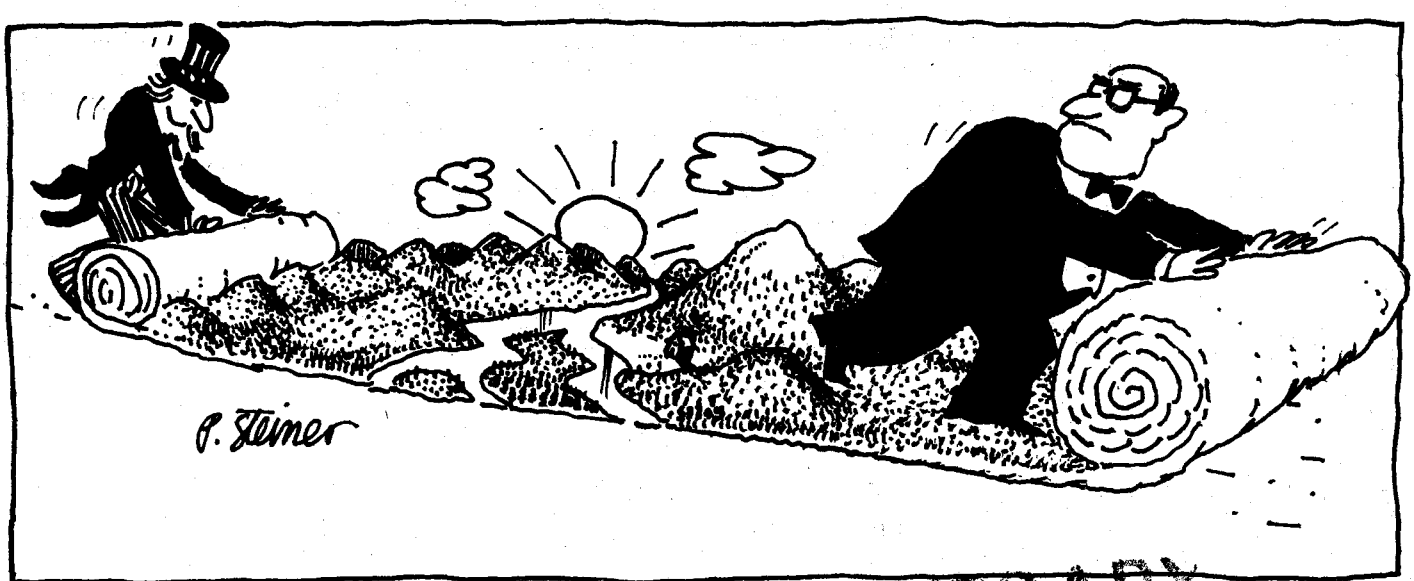
Some typical volleys: earlier this year, Andrus raised hackles in Alaska when he dismissed the state's inhabitants as "400,000 boomers and transients." A *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* editorial decried "the unjust treatment Alaskans are receiving from the likes of a peanut farmer from Georgia, an arrogant ex-Governor from Idaho and a class of Eastern elite whose views we believe guide the national environmental organizations."

Alaskans resent "outsiders" telling them what to do; the "we-know-what-we're-doing" syndrome is coupled with a rabid dislike on the part of many Alaskans for anything that smacks of environmentalism. Alaska environmentalists often oppose or urge a snaillike progress to each new project they fear might place the state's frontier economy on another boom-and-bust cycle, and so to many Alaskans the term environmentalist has become a catchall synonym for excrement. The longtime Alaska conservationists who speak their minds these days find themselves pilloried in angry letters to the editor and harassed by late-night hate calls. Gone, apparently, is that camaraderie and sense of community borne of shared battles against the elements.

To appreciate the depth of Alaska's anger, it helps to understand the history of the Alaska land question. Promised 104 million acres of Federally owned land when it achieved statehood in 1959, Alaska has, two decades later, received only 30 million acres. One reason why the transfer has been slow is that Congress granted statehood without resolving Alaska's aboriginal claims. The Native populations—Eskimos, Athapascan and Aleut Indians, today numbering about 70,000—were ignored when the United States purchased Alaska in 1867 from the Russians, whose traders and fur hunters operated primarily in the coastal regions of a vast territory occupied for ages by Indian and Eskimo people. Recognizing this oversight, then-Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall (Morris's brother) clamped a freeze on Alaska land selections in 1963.

The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 granted the Natives 40 million acres of land, plus $900 million to extinguish aboriginal claims. A provision of the act, little noticed at the time, mandated the Secretary of the Interior to withdraw another 80 million acres from lands available for selection. That land was to be held for possible inclusion in the nation's various preservation systems. Congress then had five years to make its final decision.

Udall duly introduced his Alaska lands bill, and the House passed it last spring by a 277 to 31 vote, upping the acreage set aside for preservation to 120 million acres. The higher figure, environmentalists explained, resulted from drawing new park and reserve boundaries with natural watersheds in mind, rather than map coordinates. At that point Alaskan Senator Ted Stevens, the Republican whip, began working on a compromise bill. The Senate energy committee held forty-five sessions as Stevens argued for reduced acreage and looser regulations for such diverse activities as hunting, trapping, mineral and oil and gas exploration. Environmentalists watched as Stevens won concession after concession from Senator Henry Jackson's energy panel. Among the major changes Stevens got: known mineral deposits in southeast Alaska's spectacular fjord country were opened to mining; oil



DRAWINGS BY PETER STEINER

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and gas exploration was permitted on the previously protected coastal caribou calving grounds of the Arctic Wildlife Range in far northeast Alaska; in the central Brooks Mountain Range, the Gates of the Arctic National Park was shrunk and divided to permit oil and gas exploration beneath the towering peaks.

The finishing touches were being added last October when Alaska's other Senator, Democrat Mike Gravel, stepped in and killed the compromise. The murder weapon: threat of filibuster with adjournment just around the corner. Gravel's reason: access provisions for crossing large tracts of Federal land were insufficient, Gravel said, and there was no guarantee environmentalists couldn't come back next year for the land slashed by the compromise bill. Since that time Gravel and Stevens have been calling each other unseemly names. In their invective, their disagreement over tactics and their hostility to the environmentalists' better-safe-than-sorry approach to Alaska's wilderness, the two Senators are perfect mirrors of Alaska's political climate.

Gravel also killed a proposal to extend the withdrawals for another year. Faced with the possibility that the state of Alaska could start selecting prime wilderness for resale to private interests as soon as the original five-year withdrawals expired last December 18, the Administration acted. Using the Bureau of Land Management's organic act, it placed 110 million acres of Alaska in a holding pattern. To make certain that the Federal legal claim for possible Federal parks and refuges would remain in force, the Administration placed half that land in national monument status.

That's when blood began to boil under the northern lights and the President got hanged and dunked in effigy. Monument status is in some ways more restrictive than Udall's legislative proposals. Unlike study lands (lands being considered for withdrawal by the state), whose status can be changed by administrative action, it takes an act of Congress to alter a national monument. The total amount of monument acreage in the lower forty-eight states, angry Alaskans note, is about 5 million acres—less than one-tenth of the acreage Carter set aside in Alaska with one stroke of a pen.

In Alaska one doesn't have to look far to find opponents to Carter's move. Local associations of trappers (whose traplines are illegal in national monuments), big-game guides (whose activities are curtailed or dislocated) and miners (whose exploration, digging or sluicing might be affected) estimate that the livelihoods of approximately 1,500 persons would be directly and adversely impacted by the new monuments and the Udall-Anderson bill. Then there are bush pilots, outfitters and merchants whose businesses are highly dependent on supplying these people and their families.

Although many are lifelong users of the Alaska countryside (hardly the boomers and transients Andrus loftily dismisses), the fact remains that for a good number of these the dislocations will be temporary—and may be justified from the point of view of land managers who are caretakers for 220 million Americans of vast chunks of the nation's last frontier. The dislocation could be alleviated by rapid transfer of the remaining 74 million acres of Alaska's statehood dowry (something both Andrus and Udall say they would like to see accomplished).

In Alaska one hears a great deal of rhetoric about the end of the individualistic, frontier life style. In Washington, however, the heavy logrolling against Andrus, Udall and the environmental coalition is being done by corporations whose capital-intensive endeavors have little in common with the solitary pursuits of the legendary Alaska bush-dweller. United States Borax (with a lusty molybdenum find in southeast Alaska), the Mid-American Pipeline Company (Mapco, which has a uranium discovery in central Alaska), Houston Oil and Minerals and General Crude Oil Company (co-holders of a rich sulfide deposit containing copper, lead, zinc and silver in northwest Alaska) are a few of the companies lobbying for the right to wrest mineral wealth from Alaska's rocks. Some of the other corporations exploring Alaska hard-rock mining potential include Anaconda, Cominco, Noranda, Union Carbide, as well as major oil companies, whose slipshod environmental practices in building the oil pipeline from Prudhoe Bay hardly give cause for confidence (See Fineberg: "Promises and Betrayals: The Trans-Alaska Pipeline," *The Nation*, Oct. 1, 1977). Secretary of Energy James Schlesinger has used the Iranian oil cutback as a pretext for opposing the Udall bill. (See Peter Deutsch, "The Phony Oil Crisis," *The Nation*, Apr. 21, 1979.)

Alaska has had little mining for over three decades. Costs of operating in remote northern reaches, then getting the stuff to a railhead or port, militate against anything but individual hardscrabbling or a major corporate venture. In the past decade, however, new discoveries and new approaches to mining have combined with rising world prices to bring geologists north again. Last year they spent an estimated $75 million probing Alaska's wilderness (roughly twice what they spent in 1974). Fairbanks exploration geologists predict that because of Federal withdrawals in some areas and uncertainty about future regulations in others, that figure will drop sharply this year.

Although perceived by many otherwise rational Alaskans as part of an ugly Federal land-grab, Udall's bill and Carter's withdrawals may also be viewed as attempts to establish an intelligent land-management system for the last frontier in the face of large-scale, self-serving corporate incursions. To sort out the reality that underlies conflicting claims takes time and patience. The problem is compounded by the spin-off of the anger big government rightfully generates, and by the uncertainties and dislocation foisted upon some Alaskans in this time of decision. Another contributing factor is that many Westerners

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object to decisions on huge tracts of Western land being made by a Congress heavily weighted toward the more densely populated Eastern areas (the Federal Government controls less than 5 percent of the land east of the Rockies, but in the eleven Western states 45 percent of all land is under Federal management). In Washington the final judgment for Alaska will be based on political tradeoffs that have little to do with the wild and windy areas where Alaskans will have to live with those decisions. □

LOSING THE FAMILY BUSINESS

Bottom Line On Somocismo

CYNTHIA BROWN

"If the country returns to political normalcy, we can expect in 1979 that it will recover some part of its lost ground." That was how the prestigious Central American Institute for Company Administration summarized findings on the economic effects of Nicaragua's 1978 political crisis, which culminated when Government forces bombed four cities to ruins in September. What the institute means by "political normalcy" is unclear, but there is no doubt that President Anastasio Somoza now presides over economic, as well as political, chaos.

The mass protests which began after the January 1978 assassination of opposition leader Pedro Joaquín Chamorro caused a crisis of investor confidence which immediately affected all financial and industrial sectors. Private investment, already declining in 1977, regressed to 1973 levels. Nicaraguans and foreign investors began sending funds out of the country in January, and the outflow quickened through the summer. An estimated total of $220 million fled the country in 1978, causing severe liquidity problems for the banks and the Government. According to one foreign analyst, after the Sandinista guerrillas' takeover of the National Palace in August, personal deposits were being withdrawn at a rate of $2 million a day; in September, they stopped counting.

Construction, manufacturing, commerce and basic services were all hurt by the two general strikes, the financial contraction and finally the open war. Retail sales between July and September fell 33 percent below the previous quarter's. (In September, they barely reached 27 percent of the 1977 level for the month.) Construction, the most afflicted sector, fell 45 percent over the year. In September, when Somoza retaliated against the popular insurrection, 616 businesses were destroyed by the bombing and thirty factories crippled. The estimated material damage was $66 million, which does not begin to measure the total economic loss in productive activity, taxes and employment.

While military spending skyrocketed and the National Guard doubled in size, Nicaragua's gross national product fell 5.3 percent in real terms in 1978, according to the United Nations' Economic Commission for Latin America. This represents a drop to levels of five years earlier, a "deterioration without precedent" in the country's recent history. The impact of these conditions on employment also was unprecedented. Even conservative sources place current unemployment at around 40 percent. Private consumption for 1978 fell to pre-1968 levels, reflecting extraordinary hardship; in September it was undoubtedly much lower due to mass dislocations and other factors.

Although the agricultural exports that are crucial to Nicaragua's economy were not directly affected by either the general strikes or the bombing, and the recent coffee crop was good, the political crisis is now having repercussions on cotton, which accounted for 22 percent of 1978 exports. Last month the harvest was behind schedule, with reports that some of the crop was being lost. According to labor spokesmen in Managua, fewer than half the usual number of workers had reported for picking, because of their fear of the National Guard, whose antisubversion terrorism has also forced hundreds of peasants to flee their homes. And owners' organized protests against new Somoza taxes on cotton exports have also been disruptive. What all this means for the final crop is not yet clear, but a significant cut in cotton revenue would add greatly to balance-of-payments problems.

The *somocista* (Somoza family-controlled) economy was weak even before last year, with a fast-growing deficit and Central America's highest foreign debt. Somoza's virtual ownership of the country has not only limited competition from Nicaraguan business but also kept out international development institutions and private capital from the United States. Furthermore, Somoza's public investment excesses and the regime's notorious corruption have drained fiscal resources. Since 1967 when he took over, Anastasio Somoza has increasingly neglected developmental projects that would have created jobs and diversified private investments, and instead invested in expensive highway and construction projects. These have returned tidy profits to his companies and those of his cronies but have done little to broaden the economic base. This pattern solidified after the December 1972 earthquake, when the Somozas moved into banking and construction to take advantage of incoming rehabilitation aid, diverting to their own pockets millions that could have revived the nation's commercial capacity.

In 1975, largely for external reasons—low export prices, international inflation-recession and the end-

Cynthia Brown is a freelance writer who has just returned from Nicaragua.

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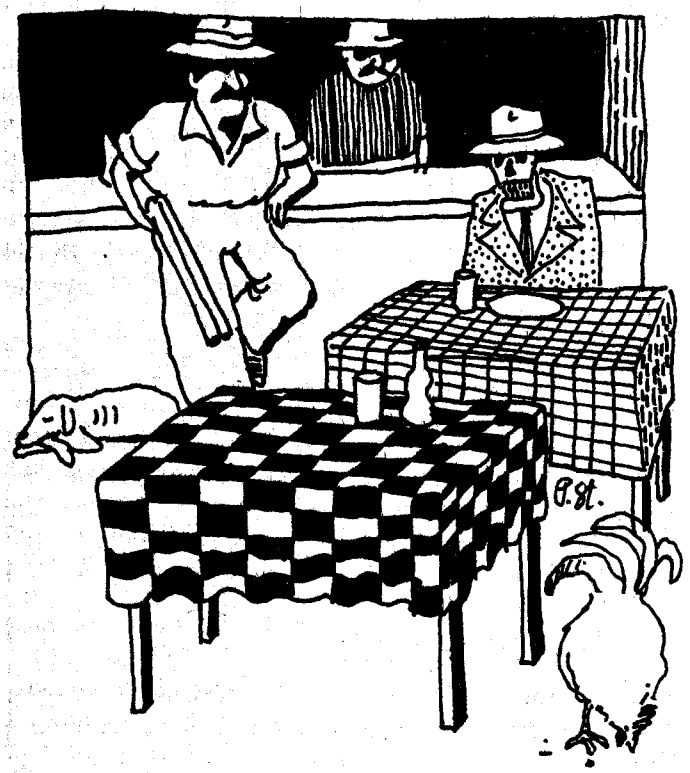
ing of earthquake aid—the economy slumped. By this time, the deficit had risen from 13 percent of national income in 1970 to 59 percent in 1975, and Somoza was borrowing heavily, often from foreign commercial banks on tough repayment terms. When the United States let it be known that it was open to an alternative to Somoza, the Nicaraguan private sector, panicked by the slump and seeing their portion of national earnings shrink in relation to the Somozas' since 1972, consolidated against the dictatorship. Their efforts were also spurred by the growing popularity of the Sandinista Front, whose economic platform went far beyond what the moderate opposition could endorse.

The major worry now is the foreign debt, which various sources estimate at anywhere between $907 million and upward of $1 billion—a third of it owed to commercial banks in the United States. Without a renegotiation, Nicaragua will be bankrupt. About $150 million in debt service payments fall due this year, including the first amortizations of post-earthquake loans. And according to *The Washington Post*, Somoza already owed about $23 million in payments to commercial banks in 1978, making his total 1979 bill to these creditors about $88 million. The president of the Central Bank, meanwhile, has said that only the interest, not the amortization, can be met. The country's total foreign reserves at year's end, he has said, were barely $20 million, and another analysis puts them as low as $5 million.

To reassure the banks of his creditworthiness, Somoza has asked the International Monetary Fund for a standby credit of $40 million, which he can obtain only by meeting conditions of an I.M.F.-designed austerity program. Observers think it likely the credit will be approved shortly, a signal to the banks to consider renegotiating. But creditors' terms are bound to be harsh, and the crisis cannot be put off indefinitely. Further, I.M.F. controls on Government spending would deprive *somocismo* of its ability to maneuver The question is, as it has been since September, how long can a politically bankrupt Somoza hang on? □



DOWN AT LA CASA TROPICA

Stopover in The War

RICHARD ELMAN

On the road to León, Nicaragua, there's a little village called La Paz Centro. A dusty little place of rutted lanes, a white church, a guard *cuartel* with a sand-bagged porch, and lots of little grocery stores. You can't see much of it from the road. It's in about 300 yards. The highway bears only a road marker, a pottery stand with a backyard kiln, and a couple of thatch-roofed restaurants where they vend *carne asada, tacos* and *cacao*.

Coming and going from the great battles I sometimes stopped to eat, or for a refreshment. Under the thatch, in the cool air, among the good smells of the food, was another, easier world. Nobody ever talked about the war, or about politics. If they knew where you had just been, or were going to, the handsome woman, and her daughters, and her old man might nod, with a certain knowingness. But they always went right to work filling your belly as fast and as well as they could. They made you sit at one of their tables, and they offered you a *ron*, or a *cerveza*, if they thought you looked at all pained.

I had been taught by a friend to drink the *cacao* which is made of a ground-up chocolate powder and maize. It's served cool and sweetish, scented with a nuttiness, in pretty wooden round-bottomed gourds, scratched out with decorations, that are made to rest on little coasters so they won't wobble.

The people who owned the place were at least part Indian; and they hadn't ever served too many gringos much aside from certain bottled drinks, or maybe cigarettes or rum, so they seemed pleased with my lack of squeamishness. If, despite the flies, I was willing to risk my stomach on rice and beans, and one of their own *refrescos*, that seemed flattering to them. They got to know all of us after a while, and they called us by various names: "*La Señora Rubia*." "*El*

Richard Elman is writing a book of short vignettes about the Nicaraguan struggle for liberation, from which this article is taken.

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Alto." "*El Señor Gasioso.*" Always in good fun.

I'm not even sure they knew we were journalists.

The morning after León fell I stopped there on the way back from looking at corpses roast on the streets, which was done as a sanitary precaution, and I had no appetite. It would be another hour before I would get back to Managua. I felt I should take something. But, earlier, in the marketplace of the old city, I had been badly frightened when a Guard patrol, to scare off looters, came around a corner at me firing into the air.

I guess I was just depressed, and hot, and unhappy with myself for not doing more, as if what I did finally mattered, could save lives, win victories, change the face of Nicaragua. Being a member of the press and watching defeat stubbornly snatched from the jaws of victory by the overwhelming arms the United States supplied the Somozas made me angry, with nobody to blame. The people were willing to die. But I was not.

That morning *el patron* of *La Casa Tropica* was toting a double-barreled shotgun in front of the food counter under his thatch-roofed hut; and I noticed another of the hangers-on wearing a sidearm. None of his women seemed about the place, behind the counter, or in the cooking shed open to the air next door. A large scraggly old rooster pecked at the dirt floor. A dog was snoring at the *patron*'s feet. Sitting all by himself at a corner table a businessman from Managua, in a suit and tie, ate rice and beans and sipped from a *cerveza.*

The *patron* greeted me, "What do you wish?"

I ordered a *cacao.*

"I can't serve you that," he told me in Spanish, with a shrug.

"You didn't make any?"

"It was impossible," he explained. "The women are afraid to go to the marketplace. . . ."

"Is that why you are armed. . . ?"

"Everybody stays inside," he said. "There are rumors of all kinds. The Guard is castrating young men, they say. Terrible rumors. . . ."

"Do you think it's true?"

He didn't answer and I was sorry for my question. With so much bloodshed and terror everywhere, why should his fears seem irrational?

I said I would have any bottled drink or a *refresco.*

He showed me all his yellow teeth: "No have, you know. There is really very little. . . ."

"I'm sorry to ask. . . ."

"*Hijos de la puta,*" said the *patron.*

I started back away from the counter toward the roadway where my car was parked when the man from Managua dropped his fork, and said in that careful English, which is often a gesture of timorous friendliness, "He is ashamed, you know, to offer his rice and beans and it will not do for you to take his lemonade. . . ."

"I would take his lemonade. He need not be ashamed. . . ."

I had been on a special medication all the time in Nicaragua and had no stomach problems—the source of my culinary bravery.

The man from Managua started to tell the *patron* that I was very thirsty, but he insisted he could not serve me anything. It was impossible. It would not be good for me. And there was so very little left for the others.

I felt he was saying he would offer nothing to this gringo—after León—and it was hurtful to me.

I got back inside my rented car and started the engine. I wouldn't try another place. I'd wait until I was back in Managua.

The car lurched forward. Through the rear-view mirror I watched for a gap in the highway traffic and saw a young man from the village in a little shed behind a next-door house washing out some clothes in a galvanized metal bucket.

Then I looked again and saw it was a pretty short-haired woman in jeans. She wore a baseball cap and had dark Indian skin, and she seemed very pleased when I waved to her.

A very flat boyish chest but pretty, and lean. Shapely brown arms. Long fingers.

The *patron* with his shotgun came up to the window of my car and he had with him a frosty bottle of Pepsi and he passed it through the window and insisted he would take no money.

"Here there is no custom for this," he explained. "It is not in favor. Here in La Paz. . . ."

Before I could say a word, he added: "Also we hate the *tanquetes norteamericanos.* . . ."

"The armored cars are British," I explained. "Only the larger Sherman tanks are American. . . ."

"And the rifles? And the rockets? The machine guns. . . ?"

"Yankee or in some cases Israeli. . . ."

"Indeed." He gave me a meaningful glance.

"The Somozas also," I quipped.

"Made in the States," he said with a smirk.

"*Tardes.* . . ."

"*Suerte.* . . ."

The bottle felt cold against the insides of my thighs as I gunned the motor.

"Goddamn son of a bitch fucking bastards," said the *patron,* in English, too.

It wasn't said at me, but was a statement to the air—to which I was asked to give assent.

I spat out the Spanish word for cowards.

"Cock sucky sons of bitches," repeated the *patron.*

Some Pepsi fizzed up from the open bottle and dribbled across my lap.

"I could get you a rag," said the *patron.*

"It's not necessary," I said, "many thanks," and drove away.

In Managua I was thirsty again as soon as I walked into the air-conditioned lobby of my hotel and I bought a round of drinks for all my friends in the bar, including, alas, a couple of Central Americans who may have been Government spies. □

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THE POLITICAL ECONOMY

The State of The Unions

THOMAS FERGUSON and JOEL ROGERS

The onslaught against the Labor Law Reform Bill by the Four Horsemen of last year's Congressional Apocalypse—the Business Roundtable, the National Association of Manufacturers, the United States Chamber of Commerce and the National Right to Work Committee—did far more than destroy that particular initiative. It also shattered all consensus within the labor movement about its options for the 1980s.

Now, as differences multiply between trade union leaders over the urgency of labor's current situation and how it can be remedied, distinct blocs have begun to form within organized labor. Some unions have thrown their weight into a renewed drive for protection from foreign imports; others are talking about rebuilding alliances with liberal, feminist and minority groups; another group is casting about for some liberal candidate to promote against President Carter in 1980.

Though the decentralized structure of American labor leaves different unions a great deal of open space for separate maneuvers, the present chaos is unprecedented in the postwar period, and is unlikely to be viable for long. Some clarification of the situation now facing labor and the institutional relationships that are at the core of trade unionism's force and failure as a political movement is or shortly will become imperative, not least because the most prominently discussed scenario for labor's near future is almost certainly mistaken.

Contrary to views widely held by its friends and advanced in the national press, what organized labor in America has most to fear in the near future probably does *not* include a sweeping new offensive by a well-organized, broad-based business coalition.

This is not to deny that major parts of labor are anything but gravely imperiled—a tidal wave of fresh hostility is clearly about to crash over many unions. No prolonged economic downturn has ever failed to trigger an attack upon unions by cost-squeezed small business, and the timely appearance of N.A.M.'s Council for a Union-Free Environment gives hope for predictive social science, if scarcely for humanity. And some big business sectors hit especially hard by the current recession, notably rubber, are likely to make common cause with the smaller enterprises, as are naturally labor-conscious large firms in sectors like retailing, textiles and steel.

Construction unions are also likely to face determined business resistance. Although the great Vietnam-inspired boom of the later 1960s strengthened the hand of the building trades enough to produce short string of settlements in their favor, it also triggered the establishment of a powerful and exceptionally well-organized business coalition formed to oppose them. The cutting edge of the reaction at the national level was the Construction-Users Anti-Inflation League, chaired by Roger Blough of U.S. Steel. One of the original nuclei that coalesced to form the Business Roundtable, this group joined with a assortment of contractors, construction companies and other businesses to roll back dramatically the percentage of unionized construction.

Yet, short of a real crash of 1979, large, capital intensive, high-technology and multinationally oriented businesses like General Electric, American Telephone and Telegraph Company, International Business Machines Corporation, E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company, most of the oil and automobile companies and the international money market banks are unlikely to find the returns on a major new anti-union effort worth the cost. In the absence of a L.L.R.B. or comparable reform legislation, the current erosion of labor's strength will continue. Simply maintaining the status quo will secure these firms all their important objectives.

The direction of events is already clear. As the aging industrial plants of the Northeast run down they will be replaced by new ones in the South and West or, increasingly, abroad, where cooperative governments in South Korea, the Philippines, Latin America, China and elsewhere stand prepared to provide American firms with a cheap and disciplined work force. Labor's decline in the United States will then appear simply to be the result of an impersonal march of events, or history, or technological progress. At the same time, revisions of labor law can plausibly be opposed by appeals to the sanctity of the state's role as a neutral umpire between competing "special interest" groups. Corporate energies and funds will be released for use against environmental, regulatory or middle-class consumer challenges.

The hazards this second strategy poses for the labor movement as a whole are acute, perhaps even greater than the threat of an anti-union blitzkrieg by many sectors of business at once, which, in its very drama and color, might generate sufficient public revulsion to be turned back. If craft unions and those centered in the more technically advanced industries accept the structurally afforded invitation to stand on the sidelines, the rest will be grievously enfeebled. Deauthorization polls challenging union shop agreements, successful employer refusals to bargain, and decertification elections challenging the unions' status as bargaining representatives would skyrocket (the last having already shot up dramatically, from

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124 with 66 percent successful in 1967 to 849 with 76 percent successful in 1977), as marginal unions were picked off one by one or reduced substantially to administrative shells.

Although the cumulative threat posed by such sami tactics would presumably alarm even the most conservative unions, the possibility for some unions to negotiate separate deals for themselves is deeply embedded in the logic of trade unionism itself, and can scarcely be "explained" by pointing to complacent or corrupt leadership.

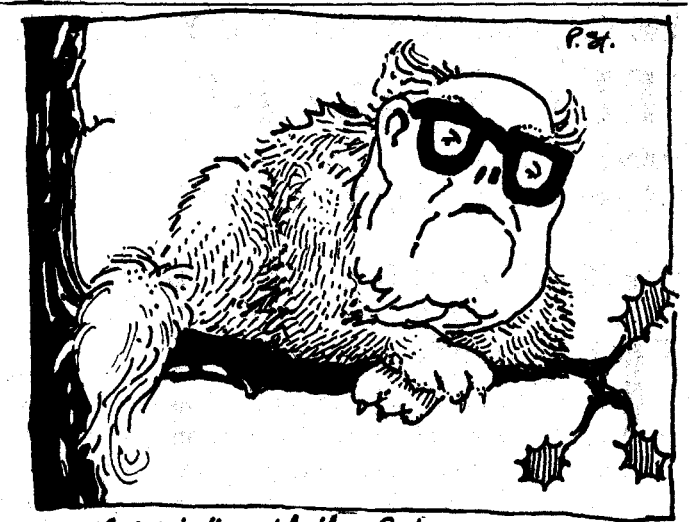
For the identity of labor unions is problematic in a way that of a business corporation is not. This is not chiefly because unions routinely compete with more powerful corporations but because of the intrinsically bivalent nature of unionism. A single trade union is both an organization marked by a characteristic institutional structure oriented to a particular clientele *and* a potential building block of a mass organization.

In this respect the trade union is sharply distinguished from the corporate firm. While a single large business firm can be a formidable political actor, its potential for mass mobilization is distinctly limited. Several firms only add up to a trade organization, and 175 large firms aggregate only to a Roundtable. (For reasons of space we omit consideration of suggestions that one Roundtable equals two political parties.) By contrast, a single union with a sizable membership easily becomes part of a coalition of unions, with the latent possibility of forming a part of a yet larger bloc, which in turn can coalesce into a still greater movement mobilizing a variety of memberships, and so on.

When, as in the 1930s, trade union challenges to the industrial status quo succeed, the explosive impact of their expansion transforms the entire balance of political forces. Even when no mobilization or demobilization is on the agenda, the logic of combination can usually be envisaged as a possibility, to unnerve or exhilarate as the case may be. But as liberal industrial relations theorists like Sumner Slichter—whose Brookings study of *Union Policies and Industrial Management* is unsurpassed as a summary of the problem—lucidly recognized in the 1930s, if the bandwagon of coordinated action can be slowed, a second, entirely different dynamic takes hold.

As an ensemble of separate organizations, trade unionism is vulnerable to a fatal federalism of responsibility and localized benefit. To the extent that cross-sector coordination diminishes, individual unions become bound to the economic logic of their particular industries. Organizationally they compete with other unions for members; politically, negotiations open for a separate peace in the class war.

A downward spiral commences, powerfully accelerated by the bureaucratization of union administration. Relations between bureaucratic elites and the membership become increasingly rigid as an "edifice complex" develops at national headquarters. Leadership turnover is minimal and, in striking contrast to



"All right," said the Cat; and this time it vanished quite slowly, beginning with the end of the tail, and ending with the grin, which remained some time after the rest of it had gone.

corporations, gerontocratic. While member discontent with existing policies may mount, finding expression in wildcat strikes or increasing refusals by rank and file to ratify proposed contracts, top union officials benefit from the overwhelming advantages of communication with one another, broad discretion in the allocation of union resources and staff, and imperial powers of agenda formation. For them, the mantle of "responsible labor statesman" hangs irresistibly close at hand, along with the money, public accolades and outside career options that follow. The Council on Foreign Relations finds willing candidates to provide the 1 percent representation of trade unionists among its membership. And, rather more improbably, so does the Trilateral Commission. (Trilateralists among recent union leaders have included Leonard Woodcock of the United Auto Workers, who provided Jimmy Carter with a critical, and almost unique, early union endorsement in his campaign for the Presidential nomination and who upon his retirement from the U.A.W. was appointed head of the United States Liaison Office and then Ambassador to Peking; I.W. Abel, who steered the United Steelworkers of America through a period of strong rank-and-file protests culminating in the victory of his designated successor, Lloyd McBride, over a powerful challenge from insurgent Ed Sadlowski; Glen Watts, president of the Communications Workers of America, who publicly blasted George Meany for criticizing Jimmy Carter after the L.L.R.B. defeat; Lane Kirkland, the perennial secretary-treasurer of the A.F.L.-C.I.O. and the cold war's Abominable Snowman, and Sol Chaikin of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, who recently effused that "President Carter has the greatest intellectual capacity of any President since Roosevelt." Kirkland and Woodcock have also served time on the Council on Foreign Rela-

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tions, as has Jerry Wurf, whose American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees failed notably to mount an effort in support of the L.L.R.B. commensurate with its status as the largest single union in the A.F.L.-C.I.O.)

Add to this the strengthening of controls on rank-and-file dissidents, either by legislation (the stranger picketing provision of the L.L.R.B. was one such measure) or in the courts (for example, the recent Circuit Court rulings in the *Eazor Express* and *Armco Steel* cases, which upheld damage claims against unions and their members for wildcatting and stranger picketing, and increased the requirements on internationals to control their locals and rank and file), and the outlook could be somber indeed.

To regain the liberating hold it once exercised on the popular imagination, labor needs to find a fresh political formula of broad appeal and manifest general benefit. Only when it has this new political program in hand can the trade union movement turn to the ultimately derivative question of whether the Democratic Party remains a plausible vehicle for its aspirations.

Protectionism, as currently promoted by major elements of the A.F.L.-C.I.O., is definitely not part of the solution. As a short-run substitute to the organizing drives and broader political campaigns required to recapture a share of political power, tariff promotion is exceedingly dangerous to the long-run future of the labor movement as a whole. By protecting only a few jobs at enormous (often steadily rising) costs that fall largely on other workers, tariffs isolate a part of organized labor from the rest. They do nothing to solve the long-run problems facing the United States in a changing world economy. And because production processes in industries, such as heavy electronics or automobiles, are characterized by substantial international integration, many unions like the U.A.W. and the International Union of Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers would be sharply opposed.

Nor is the strategy of alliance with liberal, minority and church groups now being promoted by the U.A.W.'s Douglas Fraser and his Progressive Alliance likely to meet labor's needs. While partially ameliorating labor's isolation, the move is inspired by an idea whose time has passed. Such coalitions failed in the 1960s to bring about major, enduring redirection of power in the United States. Moreover, what successes the gambit did achieve were in part the result of substantial support from corporate-dominated foundations, whose enthusiasm for the N.A.A.C.P. has not been matched by equivalent fondness for the J.P. Stevens Company boycott, and which today are preoccupied with minor variations on familiar themes in industrial relations and industrial productivity studies.

What appears to have the most potential for the years ahead is the campaign to shorten the workweek, currently co-directed by Frank Runnels of the U.A.W. and Frank Rosen of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America for a coalition of some thirty other unions.

Unlike protectionism, the impulse to shorter working hours probably holds tremendous latent appeal. Several powerful secular trends in American society augur well for its favorable reception, including the looming higher rate of unemployment in the future, the growing population of underemployed college graduates, spreading disillusion with capitalism and the work ethic, widespread revulsion at employer domination on the job, and demographic changes which pit millions of younger workers against one another for dwindling possibilities of promotion.

With an eye toward consolidating their natural support, Runnels and Rosen are at the moment directing their campaign primarily to union audiences. The case must eventually be carried to a broader public, however, and several aspects of its presentation might be reconsidered.

The vintage 1946 "full lunch pail" slogans and traditional Labor Day encomiums to steady work that dominate the rhetoric of the campaign erode its appeal to the audience below age 40—not predominantly blue collar—that is increasingly disenchanted with the conditions corporate America sets for useful work. The opportunity to present a powerful argument in general terms about the contribution shortening the working day (week—year—lifetime) make to human welfare is passed up, as are all chances for drawing attention to the source of the problem in the tension between 20th-century productive forces and 19th-century social relations. Nor does the effort seriously address the problem of international economic competition and the threat this poses to declining sectors in the United States. It steps back from drawing the obvious conclusion that efforts to shorten the working day require explicit national policies about the pace and direction of technological change.

Whatever course of action it finally pursues, labor has its work cut out for it. Since World War I, power in America has increasingly come to be exercised through the selective subsidy of public (mis)information. The financial barriers to entry into this world of foundations, think tanks, university business schools and contract research units are formidably high, high enough in fact to exclude not only labor but most businesses below the top tiers of the *Fortune* 500 (witness the $60 million development drive announced recently by the American Enterprise Institute). Still, the products of this peculiarly modern form of power exercise a strong hold on public consciousness, and to implement *any* new political program, labor must compete in this arena.

This is likely to require some major readjustments. If labor has never been able to relate to the academy or to the press with the affluent ease of the Council on Foreign Relations or the American Enterprise Institute, more than pecuniary incapacity is to blame. It has for years afforded no support whatsoever to its

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sympathizers in other organizations, like universities. It has preferred resolute anti-intellectualism amid declining strength to potentially disruptive critical evaluation of its past practice and current political options. Walled off from outside contacts, hiring most of its staff from the inside and only rarely seeking a wider public, labor is profoundly isolated from the experience of much of even the working population.

This isolation is reflected in labor's lack of a constructive political program. The major planks in its workaday political platform—protection from a liberally structured world economy, defense of United States militarism, staunch opposition to environmentalist claims and technological innovation—are largely reactive and out of step with the broad pattern of world economic development, the structure of American party politics and public sentiment. Increasingly becoming yet another declining sector in the American economy, alongside textiles, steel and shoes, labor now finds itself shunned by politicians it helped place in power, victimized by the foreign economic policy of which it was once minor beneficiary and willing servant, politically naive in a world defined by others.

Whether the labor movement in America will stir itself in sufficient numbers and intensity to reverse the trend of events remains an open question. For the last thirty years, the relationship of labor to the multinational liberalism now hegemonic in the Democratic Party has been eerily like that of Alice to the Cheshire cat. Now that top aides of both Carter and other leading Presidential hopefuls have concluded that the 1980 Democratic nomination can be won without major support from organized labor, we probably do not have long to wait before finding out what happens when the grin at last disappears. □

Constitution

(Continued From Front Cover)

weekly, *In These Times*, who argues that opposition to a convention discloses "an elitist view of politics." It is now clear that America is haunted by a broad spectrum of budget-balancing specters that falsify the nature of the present profit-push inflation, channel discontent along lines that help the profiteers and menace every effort to preserve or enlarge the social, economic and political rights of the American people.

As of this writing twenty-nine state legislatures have applied to Congress for a constitutional convention to propose a budget-balancing amendment. None of the state resolutions contains a word on how the delegates to a constitutional convention would be selected. It is assumed that they would be chosen in the same way as delegates to state constitutional conventions: namely, through state legislative districts. This means that all the built-in devices for underrepresentation for some groups and overrepresentation for other groups will apply to a national convention as well. Recent experience with state conventions indicates that most of the elected delegates are state legislators themselves, their associates, fund raisers and corporate lobbyists. Thus, any nationwide convention called today might be dominated by pros running a huge national con game with a stacked deck of cards. It could be a well-packed, one-House, super-legislature fully capable of advancing corporate interests behind a populist facade of protecting human rights.

Most of the state resolutions urge convention action or a constitutional amendment along the following lines: "In the absence of a national emergency the total of all appropriations made by the Congress for any fiscal year may not exceed the total of all estimated Federal revenues for that fiscal year." No matter what specific wording is suggested in the resolutions, however, the subject matter lends itself to a very large number of variations and alternatives. Two of these have already been suggested in Patrick Buchanan's proposals for a convention: (*1*) that the size of the balanced budget be limited to 20 percent of the gross national product, and (*2*) that all Federal income taxes be limited to one-third of a citizen's total income.

But if Congress calls a convention to consider budget-balancing, could the convention plunge into other subjects? Could it become a wide-open, general convention?

"No!" is the present answer of the organizers of the con-con drive. The model state resolution drafted by the National Taxpayers Union (and adopted without change in many states) provides that "this application and request be deemed null and void, rescinded and of no effect in the event that such convention not be limited to such specific and exclusive purpose." In 1974, seven lawyers appointed by the American Bar Association held that "Congress has the power to establish standards for making available to the states a limited convention when they petition for that type of convention."

But other lawyers have held that a constitutional convention would be a sovereign body and, in addition to deciding its own rules of procedure, could decide to take up any subjects it chose. It would be bound by neither the Congressional nor the state resolutions. When Charles Black of Yale Law School presented this interpretation to the California House of Delegates, the body was moved to vote down a con-con resolution ardently supported by Gov. Jerry Brown.

The Constitution itself provides no answer on either side of this question. Nor can an answer be provided by probing the debates at the 1787 constitutional convention or the presumed intentions of the Founding Fathers. The issue will be settled only if and when a convention assembles and tries to go beyond budget-balancing.

Bertram M. Gross, distinguished professor at Hunter College and former executive secretary of the Council of Economic Advisers, has just completed a new book on basic trends in modern capitalism, entitled Friendly Fascism.

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But the question of a limited versus an open convention is, in my judgment, a false issue. I have no doubt that a convention could be limited to the single issue of budget-balancing. But this issue is as broad as fiscal policy itself. It would be impossible to exclude from this subject various limitations on either spending or taxing. If this is so, then the convention could propose amendments prohibiting either spending or taxing for purposes that would undermine certain so-called "human rights"—whether the rights of employers to hire whom they choose, the rights of employees to bust a union shop, or the "right to life" of the 1-week-old embryo. Indeed, an entire Bill of Radical Right Rights could be written in fiscal policy terms. This is why the majority of labor leaders, and many liberals and radicals, know in their hearts that a con-con could tear up vital parts of the original Bill of Rights and many other economic, social and political rights won in recent decades.

In the meantime, the con-con campaigners enjoy the best of both worlds. While on one hand they allow fears of a wide-open convention to drive Congress into initiating a budget-balancing amendment of its own, on the other they argue that a convention can be limited to the budget-balancing issue. They also support pending legislation to establish Congressional procedures for calling a convention. This legislation was earlier introduced by Senator Sam Ervin of North Carolina and passed by the Senate without opposition in 1971 and 1973. Now sponsored by Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina and Representatives Henry Hyde and Robert McClory, both of Illinois, the proposed bill attempts to prohibit submission to the states of any convention-initiated amendment outside the subject matter set forth in the original state resolutions. Most observers feel that active consideration of this legislation would encourage the still undecided states to pass convention resolutions. If the legislatures of five more states should leap on the con-con bandwagon—say Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Illinois and Missouri—the convention would be mandated. No one can now safely predict whether the additional five resolutions will be obtained. My own estimate is that in the absence of more serious opposition than has yet appeared in Congress, the number thirty-four might be reached by mid-1980.

By one method of counting, that number has already been reached. In addition to the twenty-nine legislatures that have passed resolutions already, there are fifteen state resolutions calling for conventions on other subjects, such as prohibition of abortion and busing. If the seven of these states that have not passed balanced-budget resolutions are added to the twenty-nine that have, it would bring the total to thirty-six. This becomes significant in the light of former Senator Sam Ervin's argument that with no legislation to guide the convention-calling procedure, all convention resolutions should be counted: "In my opinion, if one-third of the thirty-four states wanted to amend the First Amendment, and one-third wanted to amend the Fifth Amendment and the other one-third wanted to amend the Sixth Amendment and they asked the Congress to call the convention setting forth no specific amendment, Congress would be obligated to call a convention." If the various right-wing con-conners should unite their now-divided forces, they might guarantee a convention call in early 1980. This might be done by model state resolutions setting forth no specific amendment; by a log-rolling understanding that a specific convention called for budget-balancing would be followed by another con-con on the next most popular subject on the conservative agenda, or by an unwritten understanding that the convention would consider prohibitions on spending or taxing for certain "undesirable" purposes.

Sparked by the con-con campaign, Congressional hearings are already underway on a budget-balancing amendment that would be passed in the usual way through Congressional initiative and ratification by the states. At the moment, there is an immense flurry of right-wing creativity on other ways of skinning the same cat. Eight proposals merit attention:

(*1*) Limiting appropriations to estimated revenues, as proposed in most of the current state resolutions;

(*2*) A more sophisticated version of the above (with a two-thirds vote in both Houses required to authorize any peacetime deficits), as proposed by an eighteen-member committee of the conservative Democratic Research Organization in the House;

(*3*) The proposal of Senator William Proxmire of Wisconsin that would require a balanced budget in any year in which the real economic growth exceeds 3 percent;

(*4*) Requiring specified annual reductions in the national debt;

(*5*) Imposing a surtax to make up for any accidental deficit, as proposed by Mississippi's Senator John Stennis;

(*6*) Milton Friedman's proposal, already supported by Republican Party leaders at their recent Tidewater conference, to limit any increase in spending to the percentage rise in the gross national product;

(*7*) Limiting total expenditures by some fixed rate of growth or a fixed percentage of the gross national product, and

(*8*) Putting a ceiling on tax revenues.

Many of the proponents of such proposals are sincerely leery of con-con. This is particularly true of members of the Congressional judiciary committees, their personal positions of influence on constitutional amendments could be weakened by a convention. But in the strange dialectics of unanticipated consequences, intentions are often self-defeating. The movement for a budget-balancing amendment in Congress also supports the con-con partisans in their efforts to line up more state legislatures. This is especially true when a previous opponent of a constitutional amendment, such as House Republican leader John

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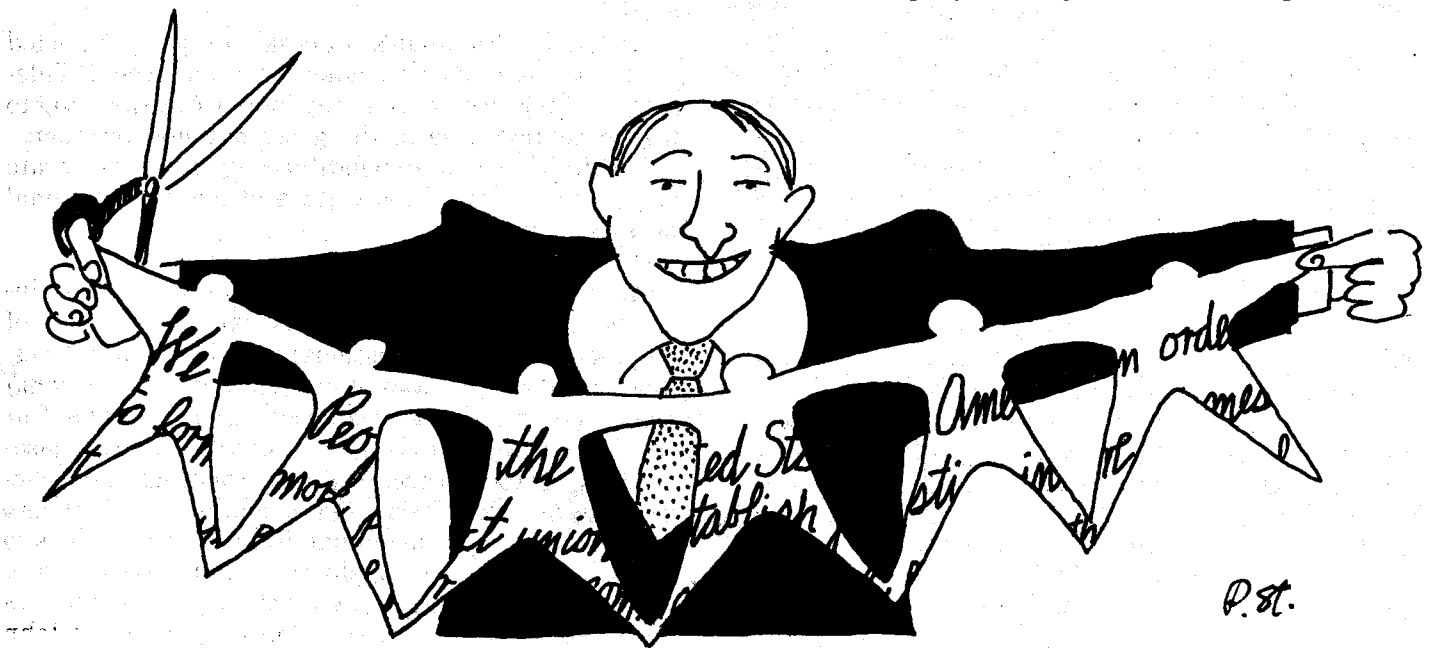
Rhodes of Arizona, suddenly switches. Under his leadership the House Republican Policy Committee on March 20 endorsed an amendment to require both a balanced budget and a ceiling on Federal spending. In explaining his switch, Rhodes pointed out that the proposed amendment contains a "safety valve" to allow deficits in times of national emergency, such as depression or war. Similar safety valves, however, are suggested in most convention resolutions. The ground is therefore laid for many other politicians who would rather switch than fight to leap on the con-con bandwagon.

Another school of budget-balancers in Congress, numbering liberals as well as moderates and conservatives, holds that Congress should balance the budget itself without any constitutional amendment. "We don't need fiscal handcuffs," says Maine's Senator Edmund Muskie, chairman of the Senate Budget Committee. "We need fiscal discipline." His definition of discipline, however, comes very close to the substance of most proposed amendments.

President Carter's definition is even closer. He not only pledges a balanced budget for 1982 but also accepts the objective of bringing total Federal expenditures down to 20 percent of the gross national product. In other words, "Leave it to Jimmy." He supports this position by warning against a "restrictive" amendment, thereby leaving open his option to go along with a "nonrestrictive" amendment. This option has been opened up by Charles Schultze, Carter's chief economic adviser. In testifying against the gimmickry of a constitutional amendment, Schultze explained some of the counter-gimmicks through which the Federal Government could quickly get a balanced budget: (*1*) raising nonbudgetary expenditures (such as Federal Housing Administration-type guarantees and Treasury loans to public or quasi-public corporations) from their present level of about $11 billion, (*2*) excluding capital expenditures (now more than $120 billion) from the operating budget, as is the practice in states with constitutional mandates for balanced budgets, (*3*) reducing Federal transfer payments to the states (now more than $90 billion a year) and (*4*) adopting regulations requiring the private sector to make certain investments. This amounts to saying that the Government could deftly slip out of any constitutional handcuffs. Therefore, no constitutional amendment would really be restrictive. With opponents like this, the constitutional amendment campaigners do not need many more friends.

The untrustworthy nature of Carter's opposition to budget-balancing amendments is borne out by a new White House campaign on the subject. The campaign's thrust is not against budget-balancing itself or even against a constitutional amendment. It is aimed at stopping con-con in state legislatures—particularly in Vermont, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Illinois and Missouri. It also looks like a trial-run confrontation with Gov. Jerry Brown before the 1980 Presidential primaries. But the Jimmy-Jerry difference is over fiscal technique, not fiscal policy substance. In the words of White House adviser Professor Lawrence H. Tribe of Harvard Law School, White House opposition to con-con is to be coupled with "a reaffirmation of fiscal austerity." To the whole tribe of Carter's "let us do it" budget-balancers, increased spending for military and corporate handouts is still sacrosanct.

Progressive reactions to the budget-balancing campaign have been sadly divided. Some of the most steadfast libertarians still find it difficult to see the connection between civil liberties and economic rights. So long as the Bill of Rights is not directly threatened, they see the budget-balancing drive against social programs as unfortunate, but no concern of theirs. Many liberals, disillusioned with Keynesian economics, are disinclined to come to the rescue of Keynesian deficits. The gut response of many radicals is "A plague on both your houses." This is backed up by the argument that the public debt



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under monopoly capitalism is an inflationary factor. It is supported by the observation—factually correct but in this context politically naive—that the Federal budget could be balanced and social programs expanded at the same time, if all the waste and overkill were squeezed out. Locally, scores of progressive organizations—such as ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now), the Ohio Public Interest Campaign and the Illinois Public Action Council—feel that their strength derives from concentrating exclusively on grass-roots issues. After all, it was at the California grass roots that Proposition 13 bloomed. What this overlooks is that the national budget-balancing campaign is a national Proposition 13 and can no longer be fought only at the local level.

Finally, many progressives are impressed by the fact that Proposition 13-style "tax revolts" have been supported by millions of working people with justified resentment against high taxes. By the same token, the national budget-balancers have an even wider appeal. With or without con-con gimmickry, they try to speak in the name not only of a taxpayer revolt but also a consumer revolt against inflation and a citizen revolt against bureaucratic red tape, inefficiency and corruption. Besides, the latest opinion polls show from 70 to 78 percent of the people in favor of a budget-balancing amendment. A poll on holding a constitutional convention would probably elicit as favorable results.

Nonetheless, a counter-campaign is stirring. Many labor unions have spoken out against budget-balancing amendments. In mid-March a group of liberal organizations formed Citizens for the Constitution to work with the White House in lobbying against con-con resolutions in the state legislatures. On March 23, victory was reported in Montana. A much broader action has been started by a committee formed by the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee which has set up a special Committee on Human Rights and the Constitution. In addition to supporting the Equal Rights Amendment, the committee is considering constitutional amendments to prohibit gerrymandering of all legislative districts, extend to the United States Senate the "one-person, one-vote" principle already imposed by the Supreme Court on State Senates and, above all, to incorporate the basic civil, political and economic rights set forth in the two United Nations human rights covenants now gathering dust in Senate committee. Consideration will also be given to an amendment embodying the view—expressed in historic dissents by Justices Black and Douglas—that corporations should not be granted the protections given to "persons" by the Fourteenth Amendment. The committee is also exploring national legislation to make any constitutional convention a truly representative, rather than a packed, body. These proposals include: (*1*) the election of all delegates and appointment of none, (*2*) the exclusive use of House of Representatives districts for these elections, (*3*) a separate, nationwide election day, (*4*) Federal contributions for campaign expenses, (*5*) free TV and radio time for candidates, (*6*) a prohibition against any person serving as both delegate and member of Congress and (*7*) one vote for each delegate, as opposed to the one-vote-per-state principle at the 1787 convention. Perhaps this is the kind of convention that Tom Hayden and John Judis had in mind when they supported con-con. Proposals along these lines—each of which has enormous potential for popular support—should give pause to the big corporations now bankrolling the con-con campaign. And in the event that con-con comes into being, they could help prevent it from bringing on a national disaster.

Opposition to the other parts of the budget-balancing campaign is more complex. It requires a ringing call to all progressive people to rally round "the flag of sound money," in John Hess's words ("The Inflation Game," *The Nation*, Sept. 2, 1978). To snatch this falling flag from the budget-balancers, progressives must face up to the necessity (now at long last accepted by George Meany) of direct controls over many prices, dividends, interest rates and rents, with wage increases limited to productivity advances and catch-ups on the cost-of-living and in substandard wage areas. They must recognize the possibility that despite all his promises to the contrary, Carter may—like Richard Nixon—suddenly reverse himself and install a phony control system that will set high and leaky ceilings on prices and "zap labor" on wages. It must be clearly understood that effective price ceilings will usually squeeze profit rates, and particularly profiteering. In turn, the corporations squeezed will yell bloody murder, violate the ceilings through both direct and indirect means, create black markets and then blame the black markets on any conscientious price controllers. These problems cannot be handled by bureaucratic diligence alone. They require price monitoring at the grass-roots and high-rise levels—sometimes bolstered by boycotts, consumers' strikes, tenant strikes and depositors' strikes. A genuine sound-money campaign requires a genuine revolt by consumers, taxpayers, tenants, borrowers and citizens in general against increases in prices, taxes, rents, interest rates and military expenditures.

Finally, there is the question of a "Federal budget balanced at full employment." Here it is essential to understand that "a full-employment budget" through fiscal manipulation alone is as deceptive as the con jobs on orthodox constitutional or "leave it to us" budget-balancing. The only honest approach to a full-employment budget is a Federal guarantee based on establishing "the right to useful paid employment at fair wages for all adult Americans able and willing to work." This means bringing back from the graveyard the original Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Bill, strengthening it with improved provisions on the control of inflation and backing it up with Senate ratification of the United Nations human rights covenants. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Ayn Rand Meets Hiawatha

RAYMOND J. DeMALLIE

ANTA YO: An American Saga. *By uth Beebe Hill. Doubleday & Comny. 834 pp. $14.95.*

Melodramatic, pseudophilosophical and ponderous, *Hanta Yo* is a best seller soon to become a movie and an ABC-TV mini-series. Fashioned and marketed as the Indian version of *Roots*, it has been brought to the public by the same publisher and network that made such successes of Alex Haley's book. The story of a small band of Lakota Indians (the Teton Sioux), who lived and hunted on the high plains, *Hanta Yo* purports to give the illusion of authentic immersion in an Indian world circa 1794 to 1835. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Although the dust jacket promises that, "More than fact, more than fiction, *Hanta Yo* has the authority of a detailed ethnographic study," Ruth Beebe Hill, over the course of twenty-five years' work, has invented this Lakota world with the aid of a mysterious Sioux collaborator named Chunksa Yuha. Although Hill has actually read a great deal of Lakota history and ethnography, she chooses to fabricate an Indian existence as she would like it to have been—a primitive emotional paradise in which every character's individuality shines undiminished by the restraints of society.

Historians, anthropologists and linguists can find hundreds of specific points with which to quarrel. Although Hill translates her title as "Clear the Way!" in fact *Hanta Yo* means "Move it! Scram!," a command addressed to one person, usually a child; the phrase does not appear in any recorded sacred songs of the Lakota nor was it, as far as we know, ever a battle cry. There is also the misleading implication that the Dakota suddenly moved westward from the Mississippi valley in 1750; the incorrect assumption that in a generation or two the western Sioux consciously changed their dialect from Dakota to Lakota; the false suggestion that eagle feathers as war honors were used only after crossing the Missouri River; the unproven assumption that the political system of chiefs and shirt-wearers was invented only after moving to the plains; an incorrect assertion that the sun dance was an old woodlands ceremony revived by the Lakota on the plains during the late 18th century; invented ceremonies involving oral sex and sodomy between men, both of which are contrary to Lakota ethnography; the unfounded assertion that war captives were sodomized by their captors; the incorrect characterization of the Navajos as making silver and turquoise jewelry in the 1830s; the inconceivable suggestion that the only questions possible in the Dakota language are rhetorical ones; the indefensible statement that words such as *admit, assume, because, believe, end, forget, forgive* and many others have no comparable concepts in the Dakota language. To correct the errors of *Hanta Yo* would amount to writing a full-scale historical ethnography of the Sioux.

But the truly fraudulent aspect of the novel is the false and pernicious sense of historical and psychological accuracy it imparts to the unknowing reader. Hill writes, "It is a story Dakotah in description and discernment, Dakotah in precept and example, Dakotah in structure and style." The claim is unfounded and the book is surely no compliment to Native Americans. Hill realizes that the Dakota/Lakota language has a different grammatical structure from English and pretends to reflect this in her prose, but she has no understanding of linguistic principles. Lakota does not have a tense system directly comparable to English; instead, verbal aspect expresses temporal relationships. Hill translates this directly, as though the past tense did not exist in Lakota, producing some of the worst Hollywood-Indian English imaginable: "The traveling band already stops twice since dawn"; "He offers these claws a symbol of the power he once owns"; "When young I am wife to a healer"; "Never before will Ahbleza see women preparing to fight." Nor does Lakota express plurality in the noun but rather in the verb. Hill occasionally translates this directly with constructions like "two enemy." Some of her conventions are aggravatingly repetitive. One example must be presumed to reflect Indian uncertainty with numbers: "ten, eleven winters," "two, three hairs." Another construction evidently reflects Indian sagacity: "The grandfathers had said so, said so"; "the wapiya says so"; "Will not the stars say so?"· "The clubmen say so."

The use of English compounds to give presumed etymological interpretations of Lakota designations for natural phenomena—e.g., "curved horn" (three-year-old buffalo), "flat-faced one" (badger), "traveling-dog" (coyote)—is so bewildering that a long glossary had to be tacked on. A lengthy vocabulary of Lakota terms and phrases is also included, many with dubious or spurious English translations. Far from bringing the reader close to the Lakota sense of the world, the convoluted linguistic tricks and the overuse of Lakota terms are reminiscent of the singsong verse in "The Song of Hiawatha."

Beyond the nearly impenetrable style, the message of *Hanta Yo* is a damaging one for Native Americans. Greed, envy, lust, love, sex, hate, murder, torture—every imaginable passion of the unfettered, childlike and noble savage runs wild in the rambling narrative. Its celebration of individual passions serves to document Hill's main contention that "The American Indian, even before Columbus, was the remnant of a very old race in its final stage, a race that had attained perhaps the highest working concept of individualism ever practiced." The term race betrays her 19th-century leanings, as the emphasis on *individualism* indicates her political bias. When Hill asks that we enter her Dakota world "uncritically, without vanity," she becomes the spiritual descendant of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Indeed, her introduction brings strikingly to mind the introduction to "The Song of Hiawatha":

> Ye whose hearts are fresh and simple,
> Who have faith in God and Nature,
> Who believe that in all ages
> Every human heart is human,
> That in even savage bosoms
> There are longings, yearnings, strivings. . .
> Listen to this simple story,
> To this Song of Hiawatha!

Raymond J. DeMallie is the author of "Sioux Ethnohistory" and numerous articles on the Plains Indians. He is associate professor of anthropology at Indiana University and is currently a fellow at The Newberry Library Center for the History of the American Indian.

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Like Longfellow, Hill uses Indian materials to comment on America. She characterizes the fierce individualism that her book glorifies as "the spiritual source not only of the American Indian but of America itself." She ignores the strongly cooperative, integrative aspects of traditional tribal life and glorifies instead the individuality of the warrior and hunter. Her characters are all societal misfits, forsaking sex, love, marriage, happiness, religion or life itself in an incessant mystical quest after individual self-expression.

Perhaps the novel is, after all, to be taken allegorically. A self-proclaimed devotee of Ayn Rand, Hill feels the United States has gone sour, sacrificed individual freedoms for misguided social responsibility. However, to attribute this perspective to a Native American nation whose history and culture are likely to be remembered by thousands of readers (and potentially millions of viewers) from this book alone is irresponsible. In the name of accuracy, the book distorts beyond recognition the past of a people who—despite the implications of the book—are not dead and vanished but are very much a part of the contemporary American scene.

The essential theme of *Hanta Yo* is identical to that of the Longfellow epic—the inevitable passing of the Indian before the coming of the white man who, despite his many gifts, brought whiskey, disease and extinction. Today we recognize Hiawatha's hackneyed words as a justification of that extinction:

> I beheld our nation scattered,
> All forgetful of my counsels,
> Weakened, warring with each other;
> Saw the remnants of our people
> Surging westward, wild and woeful!

In *Hanta Yo*, published 124 years later, the hero Ahbleza foresees the destructive fighting among his people in a vision. Hill laments: "And the next generation of Lakotah shall grow up on this plain never hearing the true parent-tongue, never glimpsing the real Dakotah heart."

As Hiawatha sailed off into the west, he left his people with advice to heed the white missionaries:

> But my guests I leave behind me;
> Listen to their words of wisdom,
> Listen to the truth they tell you. . .

Ahbleza's final message to his people heralds not the coming of the missionaries but evidently that of Ruth Hill:

> "To the Mahto people, my brother, give this message: that not all whitemen act alike . . . the Lakotah will recognize these good persons for the reason that these good persons will recognize the Lakotah."

It is shocking after a full decade of activism on the part of American Indians, the rise of Red Power and the popularity of works like Vine Deloria's *Custer Died for Your Sins*, that books as distorted and misguided as *Hanta Yo* still seize the imagination of publishers and the media. Protest may be entirely academic in the face of its mammoth advertising campaign. Perhaps in its screen versions it will be called "How the West Was Lost," another last stand for noble Hiawatha, whose imminent demise always captures the romantic core of the American imagination. □

Which Side Are You On?

SUSAN JACOBY

THE TRIBES OF AMERICA. *By Paul Cowan. Doubleday & Company. 311 pp. $10.95.*

During the bitter Ocean Hill-Brownsville school strike of 1968, a number of young reporters drew the job of making a daily trek from their city rooms in Manhattan to one of the worst slums in Brooklyn. The routine in Brownsville was unvarying: You sat in the office of the (black) community school board—because it was the only safe place for outsiders—and waited for the latest blast at the (mostly white) teachers' union. On these cheerful occasions the reporters were chaperoned by a number of middle-aged black women from the neighborhood—women whose conservative dress and imposing demeanor said, "This is serious business." One day, the assemblage was perked up by the arrival of a television reporter clad in the upwardly mobile female uniform of the late 1960s—knee-high vinyl boots, mid-thigh miniskirt and large, dark sunglasses (the better to avoid looking at the abandoned cars and burnt-out buildings). One of the neighborhood matriarchs looked at the TV reporter in disgust, propelled her out the door and said, "Honey, you just go back to wherever you were and write about them hippies." As she exited, the reporte wailed, "But I'm on *your side*."

This type of misunderstanding an mutual incomprehension, involvir Americans of different colors, clas and cultures, is the subject of Paul Cc an's *The Tribes of America*. One of tribes, Cowan observes, is "the hig mobile urban elite" to which he most journalists belong. Membersh the journalistic elite, at least for of us who came of age during the was defined less by income than highly skeptical and secular outloo an outlook which included a high gree of hostility toward certain tr tional middle-class values. Among th values were family stability, finan security, discipline in the schoo mogeneous neighborhoods, for al rel gious observance: symbols a realiti that give some people som sense of co tinuity between the past, present ar future.

Cowan's analysis of the prejudices his "tribe" is not another disgusting e ample of "Me Decade" journalism bu serious and perceptive attempt to plain why there is so little good repo ing about the lives and aspirations ordinary Americans. "I know now t I want an emotionally satisfying fait

Susan Jacoby's collection of essays on women, The Possible She, *was recently published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux.*

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he says, "an enriching family life; a secure, peaceful neighborhood for my kids. Yet those same longings, translated into political terms, have produced the vicious fights I've witnessed or the past seven years and recorded in his book. How can one embrace them nd still be an integrationist, still be a olitical progressive? Some leftists—luding many who have chosen popu- journalism as their profession—ntain their purity by heaping scorn those values. But how can one do that ithout disowning most people in this ountry, without disowning the most imal part of oneself?"

Paul Cowan answers his own question in this collection of articles, published in slightly different form in *The Village Voice* between 1971 and 1978. These pieces give life to both the flesh and spirit of the human beings who appeared as shadowy figures in so many of the headline stories of the decade: the flow of illegal immigrants across the United States-Mexican border; the battle over busing of schoolchildren in South Boston; the resistance of a middle-class Jewish community in Queens o construction of a low-income housing roject; the bitter coal miners' strike in Harlan County, Ky.; the phantasmagorical 1972 trial in which the Government attempted to prove that Father Philip Berrigan and Sister Elizabeth McAlister had plotted to kidnap Henry Kissinger.

The amount of work that goes into producing articles like these is enough to discourage most reporters (and their editors). Ordinary citizens—unlike politicians, movie stars and top business executives—have very little to gain from spending time with journalists. There is no particular reason for a Mexican immigrant in El Paso to trust an Anglo from New York, for a Kentucky coal miner to open up to a man who has never worked with his hands, for a frightened homeowner to talk to someone who obviously has enough money to move if his neighborhood seems to be going "downhill."

Cowan managed to achieve the cooperation, if not the total trust, of these people in the only way it can be done—by immersing himself in their communities for weeks at a time and by following up their stories for months and sometimes for years. Even when he does not agree with the views of the people he writes about, he manages to present them on their own terms. Most of these pieces are remarkably free of the condescension or idealization that frequently ruin the attempts of journalists

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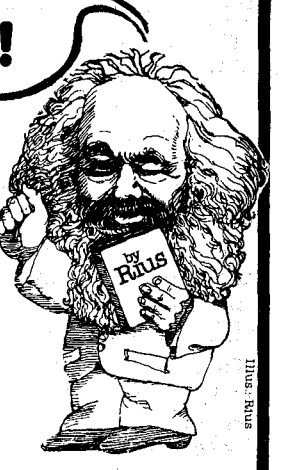

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to convey the reality of life in other "tribes."

In my opinion, the best article of this very good lot is Cowan's account of the trial of the Harrisburg Seven, in which the Government failed to prove its contention of the plot to kidnap Kissinger. After the acquittal, Cowan conducted lengthy interviews with the jurors and found most of them were furious at the notion that they would have voted for a conviction simply because they disagreed with the defendants' radical views.

"How stupid did those people in Washington think we were?" asked one juror. "Did they think that just by picking a certain part of the United States they could get a guilty verdict? Don't they know that people are people, whether they come from Northern Florida or Southern California? I mean, we all have minds and feelings. . . ."

Of all the worlds Cowan enters, the one I find most alien is described in "Orthodox in New York: A Journey Through the Year 5738." His exploration of the world of deeply observant Jews—many of them survivors of the Holocaust—was motivated by his search for his own Jewish identity in the aftermath of his parents' tragic death in a fire. Although Cowan makes it easy to understand what traditional Judaism means to believers, it is still difficult to connect this tradition with young American Jews who, while they may long for ritual or ethnic identity, continue to regard faith as an inaccessible mystery. Tradition is not meaningless without faith, but it cannot fill the same role as tradition with faith.

But this piece too is filled with the compelling voices of individuals. Talking about her *shul*, one woman says, "I always push myself as far back as I can so that my husband, on the ground floor, can't see me. I couldn't cry if I thought he was looking at me. I'd be ashamed. And when you *daaven* you want to open up your heart to the Almighty. . . . But if I sit with the men, or even see them, I worry that I'll look like a fool."

Neither the author nor the reader draws any firm conclusions from these tales of the tribes of America. However, the diversity of our cultural values makes it easy to understand why letting one's neighbor alone, rather than working collectively, has been a dominant feature of everyday American life. As Cowan suggests, that has been both a strength and a weakness.

This collection deserves one of the highest accolades a journalist can receive: nearly all of these pieces have enough depth and insight to be well worth reading, or rereading, years after their original publication. □

Jane Austen in Milledgeville

ROBERT B. SHAW

THE HABIT OF BEING: Letters. *By Flannery O'Connor. Edited, and with an introduction by Sally Fitzgerald. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 617 pp. $15.*

An author's private correspondence is only private for a time: publishers and archivists hover in the background ready to compile and classify. Men of Letters, when they write letters, are aware of this. While spontaneity disappears under such circumstances, self-importance runs rampant. Flannery O'Connor's letters keep free of these depressing tendencies. They obviously were not written with the reading public in mind; and just for that reason the reading public is bound to profit all the more from them. They are not merely comically diverting and intellectually keen: they are revealing in ways not altogether expected of the writer's personality; they chronicle her simultaneous pursuit of what Jacques Maritain called "the habit of art" and what Sally Fitzgerald, the editor of this volume calls "the habit of being."

These letters will be prized for many reasons, but not least for their author's sense of humor, which seems scarcely ever to falter. Some readers have been more disconcerted by amused by the broad comic touches in her stories; they have wondered what place such effects can have in a moral landscape so severely drawn. One can now send such inquirers to the letters to see that any Manichaean dichotomizing of the comic and the spiritual was foreign to O'Connor's whole way of thinking. Her sense of humor, sometimes wry, sometimes raucous, was as deeply rooted as her faith. She needed every bit of both, afflicted as she was by the incurable disease of lupus and gifted with a piercing eye for all forms of human depravity from high crimes on down to what she called "low dodges of the heart." The humor is without bitterness; although it comes from someone living under suspended sentence of death, it never turns forced or defensive. It was an honest delight to her, as it is now to us.

During most of her writing career O'Connor's illness confined her fairly

Robert B. Shaw, a poet, is the author of Comforting the Wilderness *(Wesleyan).*

THE SWANS IN MISSOURI

This year, one more body of water
has disappeared, and the swans
who may not find water,
are by themselves. I saw one,
leaning toward a field of wheat.
Its face had that compassion
the privacy of death engenders.

I slip nightly in
the woman I love, and wake
into a field that scares me.
If I lived on the white grain,
would I thirst, is surrender
a folding of hands?

My own field I've not cut, that
once a day I may someday die
on my knees, like some bird,
the gown of my body loosened.

Why no words for this,
this wind, the field in the wind and I
feel myself grow lean.
If I've done nothing more than believe
illuminations in the heart,
forgive me the kingdoms of wheat,
and the swan, unto whom I turn.

Mark Rubin

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losely to her mother's farm in Milledgeville, Ga. The world around her, however narrowly or widely she plotted its circumference, generously gratified her taste for absurdity. On the farm itself she was plagued and entertained by an endless procession of eccentric and reckless hired help. She particularly enjoyed a dairyman who called all the cows he was milking "he." The turnover was slower in the kitchen than in the dairy, though the O'Connors must often have wished otherwise: "Louise has been drunk for the past two Mondays . . . she is impossible when she is drunk, she insisted on polishing the sink with silver polish."

The folkways of her region at large held O'Connor's attention. She looked forward to the annual election of Miss Rum Spirits of Turpentine and never forgot the concerts on the Georgia radio in which, every year, Senator Pappy O'Daniels would conduct the Light Crust Dough Boys in something appropriate for Mother's Day. At a Georgia literary luncheon the menu was relentlessly appropriate: "Tara Prime Ribs, Ransy Sniffle Potatoes, Tar Baby String Beans, Uncle Remus pecan pie, etc."

There were plenty of amusing things to be contemplated outside the South as well. She found much literary criticism funny, and she relished her occasional lecture trips to universities, one of which, she wrote to J.F. Powers, had a "library [that] was brand new and specialized in the second volumes of trilogies." Of course the Church, in Cardinal Spellman's era, offered its share of priceless moments. Toward the end of O'Connor's life, some Sisters in Canada with the best of intentions sent her "'A Check on the bank of Heaven.' . . . Pay to the order of *Flannery O'Connor* '00 Hail Marys.' At one corner is a picture of the Christ Child & under this, the word *President*. On the other side is the Virgin—*Vice-President*!"

Sometimes the jokes go on from letter to letter and only get better. There is a saga dealing with a female acquaintance waiting for her 90-year-old neighbor to die so that she can inherit her book. Throughout the collection Flannery's day-to-day life with her redoubtable mother, Regina, is traced with a knowing, affectionate humor. "'Who is his Kafka?' she says. 'People ask me.' A German Jew, I says, I think. He wrote a book about a man that turns into a roach. 'Well, I can't tell people *that*,' she says. 'Who is this Evalin Wow?'" When Wow was asked to provide a blurb for *Wise Blood*, he wrote: "If this is really the unaided work of a young lady, it is a remarkable product." Regina, according to Flannery, found this insulting: "Does he suppose you're not a lady? she says. *Who* is he?" Frequently the O'Connor wit was self-directed; after hearing herself on the radio she wrote: "I sound like a very old woman with a clothespin on her nose and her teeth in a dish beside her." She referred to herself once as "a hillbilly Thomist."

Humor can be made apparent in brief quotations. It is much harder in a small space to speak of the other qualities that make this book memorable. Candor is certainly one of them: an unembarrassed personal and intellectual honesty. O'Connor did not tailor her opinions to suit the occasion. In her letters as in her fiction she told the truth as she saw it. The value of such integrity was recognized by people whose temperaments differed widely from hers, to whom her frankness must have given many a jolt over the years.

The longest and most intense series of letters is addressed to a woman identified herein only as "A." who initiated the correspondence with a fan letter to O'Connor. It was to continue for nine years, until O'Connor's death, during which time "A." entered the Roman Catholic Church, attempted to write fiction herself, and provoked her mentor to set down on paper many of her most deeply considered thoughts on theology, on problems of fiction and on her own work. These letters are one side of a high-spirited intellectual tug of war; while a tension between opposing personalities is evident in them, so also is a mutual respect that grew into affection. When "A." after some years felt compelled to leave the Church, O'Connor responded with a remarkable mingling of tact and forthrightness which allowed the friendship and the letters to continue. She did not allow her incomprehension of other people's choices to sever her connection to them. "Love and understanding are one and the same only in God," she wrote to "A." "Who do you think you understand? . . . I love a lot of people, understand none of them." She acknowledged the presence of mystery in the human as well as in the divine.

"A" and the other correspondents come through with great vividness. So attentive is O'Connor to their questions that their letters seem almost to be present along with hers. She varies her tone to meet each friend at a comfortable, intimate level of discourse—the mark of a good letter writer. One might simply say that she appreciated the uniqueness of each friend as deeply as she did her own. She paid people the ultimate compliment of taking them as they were, not demanding that they be made over in her own image to merit her acceptance.

The patience, tolerance and hospitality shown in the letters should help clarify O'Connor's treatment of her characters in fiction. In the interest of what she called "Christian realism" she sometimes depicts characters with such stark objectivity that some readers are troubled by what seems an absence of human warmth in her writing. Again, telling the truth was her concern; and it

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may be that in order to do that she put a distance between herself and her characters—a form of asceticism carried into art. But there was never any doubt in her mind that truth-telling was a way of caring. She noted with pleasure a conversation of some friends about her late masterpiece, "Revelation": "Maryat's niece asked her why I had made Mary Grace[the grotesque Wellesley student in the story] so ugly. 'Because Flannery loves her,' said Maryat. Very perceptive girl."

Sally Fitzgerald, herself the recipient of many of these letters, is to be thanked for having edited them knowledgeably and unobtrusively, and for having provided headnotes and a warm and discerning introduction. It is almost superfluous to add that this book is the most illuminating commentary to appear so far on Flannery O'Connor's fiction. To read through the letters is to see her stories accumulate and her novels (each of which, in progress, she dubbed "Opus Nauseous") grow to assume their final shape. In consulting with literary friends such as Caroline Gordon and the Fitzgeralds, she anticipated most of the unfavorable critical comments she was to receive. She responded to criticism of her work, both before and after publication, cogently and creatively. It is intriguing to learn that stories which seem inevitable in every sentence, such as "A View of the Woods" and "Good Country People," once had different endings making for a different effect. The account of O'Connor's struggles to play fair with the unsympathetic character of Rayber, in *The Violent Bear It Away*, indicates a great deal about her moral and artistic conscience.

A few hours a day for fiction writing was all that her illness gave her energy for. The balance of the time she filled with writing these letters, entertaining many visitors, resting and tending the ever-increasing flock of peafowl whose appetite for her mother's flowers was insatiable. Under this regimen a talent developed which if anything became more vital toward the end. "Revelation," "Parker's Back" and "Judgement Day" are the works of her last year.

Probably the O'Connor letters would not have been as numerous, varied, or profound had she not been circumscribed by disease. Knowing her mortality brought forth much in her that was lively and enduring. Some would call that irony. If I felt I might safely avoid the excessive solemnity which she saw as humorous, I would call it grace. St. Paul is the authority on these matters; as he said, "Dying we live." □

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FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

No wars, no Victorian murders, no distant worlds in future days, no nuclear meltdowns—the new movie offerings in New York treat of love. They do so at no great depth but, as entertainment, with varying degrees of success. To wit—

In *Love on the Run*, Francois Truffaut has apparently completed his account of the childhood and grotesquely prolonged adolescence of Antoine Doinel, which began in 1958 with *The Four Hundred Blows*, and continued in *Love at Twenty* (the "Colette" sequence), *Stolen Kisses* and *Bed and Board*. It has been a remarkably sustained and rewarding collaboration between the director and Jean-Pierre Léaud, whose talent Truffaut spotted when the actor was yet a child. The present film is a recapitulation, with frequent flashbacks lifted from the earlier pictures, of the field studies of women made by Doinel, that most coltish of womanizers who, true to his breed, was forever confusing self-love with adoration of his prey. The girls of his past are now competent adults and Antoine, who perhaps never will reach that state, ricochets from one to another, for all the world like a ball in an all-female game of croquet. As in all the chapters after *Four Hundred Blows*, which was the poignant story of a tormented boyhood (and may be thought to account for Doinel's capacity to make an amorous fool of himself), the narrative of *Love on the Run* is more complex than significant. At the end, Antoine and Sabine (Dorothée) have decided to try to make a go of it. Who can say that they will (certainly they admit a doubt) who knows that this is really the end of the story?

Meanwhile, there is still Léaud, who has sustained the fragile project for all these years by displaying a mercurial charm through a series of episodes that are more exasperating than charming. In movement and expression, he is the most agile, most hilariously eloquent of actors; one forgives the feckless selfishness of Doinel because Léaud demon

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rates its quality with such exquisite ·ecision. But chasing skirts is a young an's game, and Doinel no longer looks ‹e cupid's cadet. All in all, I hope Sane domesticates him; it will be a loss the screen, but scarcely irreplaceable.

In good time for the drive-in summer ıdiences, Paramount has released Mi-ıael Ritchie's *An Almost Perfect Affair*, starring Keith Carradine and onica Vitti. It is set at Cannes during e weeks of the film festival and reinds me of films of a few years back in hich Jean-Paul Belmondo behaved ost irresponsibly and one saw well-·essed, well-tanned people arriving at ıd departing from international air-ırts. Carradine is Hal, an independent ovie maker, who has come to Cannes hope of selling his film on Gary Gilore (the young man who started a ·gue for demanding to be executed) to meone he might bump into on a café rrace. (If your eyes are sharp, you'll ot some celebrated faces at the taes.) Vitti is Maria, wife of Freddie af Vallone), a considerably older and agnificently wealthy Italian proıcer. They meet at customs, where al is trying to get his cans of films, ıd Maria her little dog, out of limbo, ıd are almost immediately thereafter scovered in bed, assuring each other at they don't usually do this sort of ing.

The affair is not quite perfect, beuse Hal keeps insisting that his movie his whole life and Maria keeps prosting that people are more important an objects (with which, to be sure, she more than adequately supplied). ıey are unable to resolve this philophical difference, so, after several yllic interludes, one of them in the obgatory oversized bathtub, they part at e airport, Maria being solicitously ·eeted at their private plane by Frede, who is as complacent as the elderly ısband of a beautiful woman is wise to ·.

This, as you can readily see, is luxurus piffle, but it is gaily performed ıd, the producers point out, by filming in Cannes at festival time, Ritchie has ·en able to enliven his picture with rdonic comment on the industry's ımboyant techniques of exploitation. ıere is indeed some of that, and, lookg at the press kit Paramount sent me ıey sent it to me twice, in fact), I'm inined to think that it takes one to know ıe.

Carradine and Vitti make a handme pair; the yachts glistening in the ırbor were all bought with kings' ranms, and pageboys run from room to room with bouquets and iced wine. Two hours of that will fill any otherwise empty evening.

Ricky Schroder is a sturdy, blond-haired 8-year-old with a precocious ability to weep prodigiously on cue. He stars in Franco Zeffirelli's *The Champ*, as unabashed a tearjerker as ever I have seen in a long career of avoiding such things (including the original 1931 production of *The Champ*). For two hours and one minute, little T.J. is ground between the emotional millstones of his parents (Jon Voight and Faye Dunaway). He is a failed boxer, alcoholic and suffering from persistent headaches, who walks horses at Hialeah; she is now the wife of an elegant geriatrist who seems to have at least one office on the yacht of a fabulously rich horse owner (Joan Blondell). Between them, mother and father just about break the heart of the brave little tyke, but in the end it is Dad who dies like the champ he really is. Jackie Cooper survived the battered child part in the original *Champ* to become a successful TV actor and producer, so presumably Ricky Schroder will not be permanently scarred.

Why is it, though, that I am scornful of Zeffirelli's tale, but yet disposed to smile amiably, if fatuously, on George Roy Hill's equally sentimental *A Little Romance*? Perhaps it is because the saccharine exploitation of love is acceptable entertainment when the exploitees are seen to be enjoying themselves, but deplorable when they are being sadistically buffeted for our amusement (and admission dollars). Or perhaps simply because it is more fun to spend a couple of hours with some love-intoxicated madcaps than with a bunch of psychological casualties.

It is a bit sly of Warner Brothers to promote *A Little Romance* as a Laurence Olivier film; he is not the star, but the catalyst of the affair—one of those not infrequent occasions when Sir Laurence takes a holiday from the business of being a distinguished actor. The stars are Diane Lane and Thelonious Bernard, who are said to be, and probably are in fact, younger than 18 and therefore in need of an adult companion if they are to cross international borders on a pilgrimage from Paris to Venice, there to vow their eternal love under the Bridge of Sighs. He is the son of a Paris taxi driver, she the stepdaughter of an American diplomat or multinational executive (it was not clear, and in any case the difference is trivial). They are attracted to each

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other by discovering a mutual enjoyment of Heidegger, and they are both more poised, resourceful and attractive than my experience of teen-agers would lead me to expect (I said the film was a confection). Julius, their elderly companion, mouthing English with an ingratiating accent, is by dress, ribbons and modest admission a retired officer of the French foreign service; in the police records of several countries he appears as a talented scamp. Olivier throws himself into this part with a spritely defiance of age and dignity that suggests he has been taking private lessons from Robert Morley.

Casting note: Arthur Hill plays the husband of the mother in both *The Champ* and *A Little Romance*. In fact, he seems to be wearing the same clothes, speaking the same lines, feeling the same sympathy for the young and having the same marital difficulties in both pictures. I wonder if he is wise to let himself become known as an actor who plays the husbands of flighty women who find it difficult to regain a relationship with their offspring by previous husbands. He does it well, but the work is rather specialized. □

TELEVISION

PETER SOURIAN

When I was in school a couple of decades ago, writing a story or poem was something you did in *spite* of your desire to be a socially acceptable person and your fear of being thought of as a sensitive jerk among the healthy jocks and cheerleaders.

The atmosphere has changed somewhat since then. Multitudes of people, often with limited imagination, nevertheless see "creativity" as a most desirable asset—even more desirable than beauty, truth and goodness. As a consequence studio art, music composition classes and writers' workshops are jammed with types who might have been bucking for halfback in the good old days.

I am prompted to this reflection upon reading *Friendly Fire*, by a literary fellow named C.D.B. Bryan, which has been made into a three-hour ABC Theatre presentation to be seen on April 22. Starring Carol Burnett, in her first dramatic TV role, as Peg Mullen, the mother of an earnest Iowa farm boy killed in Vietnam when American artillery fire was mistakenly directed at American troops, the story raises several disparate questions. One of them: Are we really very well served by stories that have been relentlessly hunted down by writers with thinnish gifts? Would we not be better served by stories which first hovered like restless spirits in some insubstantial realm, waiting to attack writers, who would then be forced to give them substance?

C.D.B. Bryan himself does seem a gifted man (as Carol Burnett is an excellent actress), yet I confess to a querulous reaction when I learned how he found his subject. Having been a teacher at the Iowa Writers' Workshop, he had stopped off in Iowa to visit a former colleague. There he heard the story of Peg Mullen whose "son had been killed in Vietnam and instead of shutting up about it like a good patriotic gold star mother, she had angrily published an anti-war ad."

Bryan goes back East; soon a magazine editor and then, according to the TV film, Bryan's agent become involved. Nothing has been written at this point, yet producing and packaging the Mullens' agony are already underway. Who knows? It might even end up as a TV production with a big star like Carol Burnett.

I repeat, I suppose this is a querulous reaction. I justify it partly because Bryan himself, who spent endless days out there with the Mullens, becomes an intrusive character in both the book and the TV production, and so I feel in vited to assess him as a character. Th book shows him becoming exasperate with the Mullens for not letting go o their dead son; the script, by Fa Kanin, shows the Mullens exasperate with him. Interestingly enough, th flesh-and-blood actors make the Mul lens more attractive human being than Bryan does in his book.

When Peg Mullen sees her son's bod intact (he had been killed while asleep when a little piece of shrapnel pierce his back and neatly entered his heart she has a powerful reaction: "I do thin I wanted him to have been blown t bits. . . . He was *all whole! All whol* Why couldn't he have been blown t bits? So I could believe he died . . . in . . a . . . *war*?" Bryan decides to investigat all the circumstances of Michael's deat for the Mullens while simultaneousl milling this grist into a book. This is nc a conflict of interest, but it is, as Pe Mullen once points out, a bargain, deal. At last he reports his finding there's been no cover-up of the boy death as the Mullens had thought, n dastardly manipulation of casualty fig ures, no viciously ambitious battalio commander.

Bryan leaves these rather simple pe ple looking foolish; he's gone and don great research which has proven ther unnecessarily suspicious. But their fee ing that their son had been done in b

JUG BROOK
For Ed Godsey, 1931-1966

Beyond the stone wall,
the deer should be emerging from their yard.
Lank, exhausted, they scrape at the ground
where roots and bulbs will send forth
new definitions. The creek swells in its ditch;
the field puts on a green glove.
Deep in the woods, the dead ripen,
and the lesser creatures turn to their commission.

Who grieves for the lost deer,
for the fish that clutter the brook,
the kingdoms of midge that cloud its surface,
the flocks of birds that come to feed?
The earth does not grieve.
It rushes toward the season of waste—

On the porch the weather shifts,
the cat dispatches
another expendable animal from the field.
Soon she will come inside to cull her litter,
addressing each with a diagnostic tongue.
Why have I learned nothing? God,
into whose deep pocket our cries are swept,
it is you I look for
in the slate face of the water.

Ellen Bryant Voigt

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Nora Sayre, Robert Sherrill, Calvin Trillin,
Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., Alan Wolfe **write it.**

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friendly fire was not wrong; it was only the superficial details they had wrong. There *had* been a cover-up; but it was not in the details, it was in the grand design, the entire war.

So, querulously, I think: Good stuff for a book, good stuff for a TV show, too bad we didn't have it at length in 1965 when the war was escalating. It took too many years before Vietnam itself really got to star on TV. Once it finally did, almost everyone in the country, except for maybe Walt Rostow, began to understand what a bad business it was. So ordinary people are not such fools, once they've been apprised of the truth, and on a number of critical occasions it has been TV that supplied the inescapable facts.

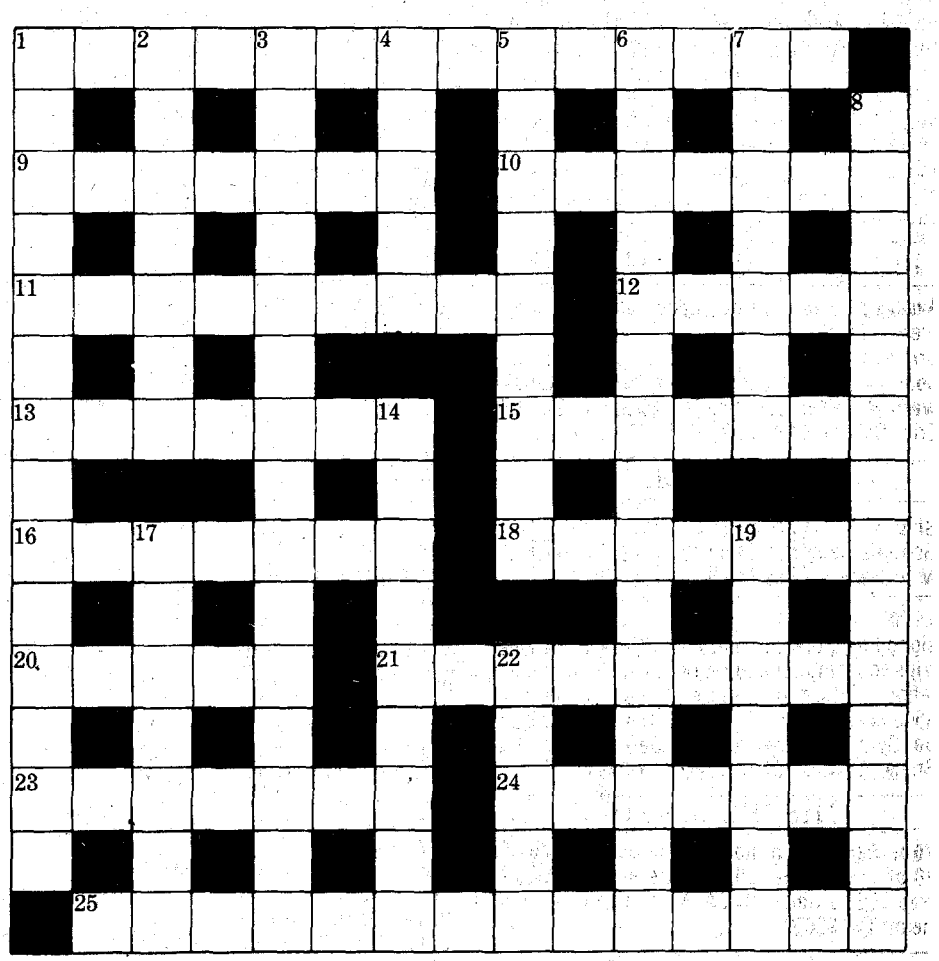
The major occasion was that of the Army-McCarthy hearings which were televised for a solid thirty-six days in 1954 and which undid McCarthy by literally exposing him. But of course the forces which had spawned McCarthy were not so easily undone—were not as telegenic, as it is now the fashion to say. Those forces which brought him to power, and which at one time had more than 50 percent of the American people supporting him, were the same forces which, long after McCarthy was gone, sent Michael Mullen abroad in a uniform and got him killed.

McCarthy, like Michael Mullen, was a farm boy, and on April 24, Public TV takes us back to Wisconsin to trace his early rise to power and fame in *An American Ism: Joe McCarthy*, a ninety-minute biography which starts by interviewing people who knew him as a small boy. It tells, again through people who knew him, of his struggle through college and law school, his lack of any genuine convictions. People who knew him in the Marines tell how he fabricated a combat-hero image for himself: others describe his campaign methods. It is a perfectly good program, probably of greatest value for younger people who may not know who he was and what he did. The account of how and why he first came to charge (at Wheeling, W.Va. in 1950) that there were fifty-seven card-carrying Communists in the State Department is especially clear: he was desperately in need of an issue, any issue.

Erich Fromm once made a distinction between politicians and prophets which went something like this: politicians look for issues, while issues are always looking for prophets. Very obliquely, to be sure, it's a little like the way writers sometimes look for stories while stories are sometimes looking for writers. □

Crossword Puzzle No. 1771

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 It isn't hard to be a burglar if you do, as a way to get the rest. (4,6,4)
9 Not another name for the Los Angeles team. (7)
10 Shingles do, where car robes used to be thrown. (7)
11 Simple men "tell and show" a tool of some sort. (9)
12 We hear the ten-fifty to be superior. (5)
13 Angered, sort of? Yes, really angered! (7)
15 Some art form, according to what Toscanini might have heard. (7)
16 Dresses for the unusual artiste. (7)
18 What British braces do? (7)
20 One of the well-known brothers, committed to silence. (5)
21 Bad verse robs this of the answer, according to seers of a sort. (9)
23 Presently at this place, but otherwise impossible to locate. (7)
24 Prepared to act, getting out in the wrong boat. (5,2)
25 One can't by dropping a modern one, but superstars often try to. (5,3,6)

DOWN

1 Wells produced this—not exactly like clockwork! (3,4,7)
2 A flint worker sound as though he might 1 across. (7)
3 Updated by Brecht and Weill. (3,7,5)
4 Possibly a magazine for children? (5)
5 A big improvement on the Dickens period! Playboy might like them. . . . (4, 5)
6 . . . . and a much closer characterization by Dickens. (8,7)
7 Importune, making it thus legal. (7)
8 The initial cause of the Trojan War, in itself the fruit of the argument. (5,2,7)
14 Nothing at home plate above it—that's not being truthful! (9)
17 A short time in the tower for the pitcher, perhaps. (7)
19 A facsimile for use in the printing and composing role, etc. (7)
22 The balance of incrustation is graduated. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1770

ACROSS: 1 X marks the spot; 10 and 11 Hunt the thimble; 12 Wagging; 13 Oldster; 14 Insults; 15 Stealth; 16 Editing; 20 Magenta; 23 Opaline; 24 Spatter; 25 Spirits; 26 Acheron; 27 On a large scale. DOWN: 2 Manages; 3 Retrial; 4 Sleighs; 5 Hot-dogs; 6 Spindle; 7 Orbital; 8 The White House; 9 Search warrant; 17 Italian; 18 Initial; 19 Guesser; 20 Massage; 21 Graphic; 22 Natural.

Readers are invited to send for a free copy of Mr. Lewis's "ground rules." Address Puzzle Department, *The Nation*, 333 Sixth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10014.

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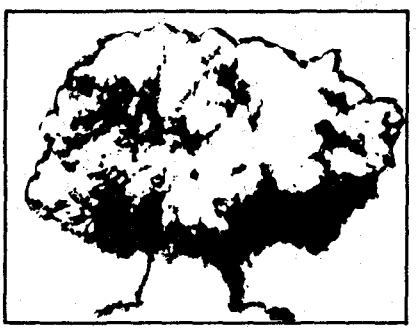

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